A Sure Guide TO HEAVEN: OR An Earneſt Invitation to Sinners to turn to God, in order to their Eternal Salvation.

Shewing the thoughtful Sinner what he muſt do to be Saved.

By *Joſeph Alleine* late Miniſter of the Goſpel at *Taunton* in *Somerſetſhire*.

John 3. 3. *Except a man be born again he cannot ſee the Kingdom of God.*

LONDON:
Printed for *Tho. Parkhurſt* at the *Bible* and *Three Crowns*, at the lower end of *Cheapſide* near *Mercers* Chappel, 1700.

BRITISH MUSEUM

TO THE

READER

That would be ſafe and happy.

IF it were only poſſible thou mayeſt live hereafter, and be called to account in another world for what thou doſt in this, it would be thy wiſdom to take the ſafeſt courſe, and not to run the conſtant hazard of being dragged by death to judgment before thou wert prepared to meet thy Judge. But another Life, *and a* Judgment to come, *are more than poſſible: There is an high probability, yea as great a certainty as can with reaſon be expected, that death will not put an end to thy being, that thou ſhalt live after the return of thy body to the earth, and that then thou ſhalt be tried, and ſentenced to ſuch an happineſs or miſery, as will be incomparably greater than any thing, nay than all thou didſt ever feel or ſee, hear of or imagine. Theſe weighty truths are taught and eſtabliſhed in ſome meaſure by the light of nature, but much more clearly and firmly by the oracles of God in the holy Scriptures. Beſides what they ſay of the different ſtates of ſeparated ſouls, they plainly teach, and ſtrongly aſſert*, That God hath appointed a time in which he will judge the whole world, by the Mediator Jeſus Chriſt; That that great Mediator, who is God, as well as Man, will deſcend from heaven, attended by its glorious Inhabitants, with triumphant acclamations to his royal throne; that a mighty voice will cite all that ever dwelt on earth, to make their perſonal appearance; that that awakening and commanding ſummons ſhall be preſently heard and obeyed by the dead, and they,

with the quick then remaining alive, ſhall all ſtand before the Judgment-ſeat, that after a throughly ſearching and impartial trial; which will reach men's ſeveral talents, truſts, and opportunities of getting and doing good, and their moſt ſecret actions, words and thoughts, every one ſhall receive an unalterable ſentence of abſolution or condemnation; and that then, ſuch as are approved and abſolved, ſhall inherit an heavenly Kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world, be like the Angels, their delightful companions, converſe with their moſt amiable and loving Saviour, beholding and partaking of his glory; yea, reſemble, ſee and enjoy God himſelf in compleated holineſs, and everlaſting bliſs: And thoſe on the other hand, that are reprobated and damned, ſhall never be admitted into the regions of light, nor yet be favoured with a glimpſe thereof, but ſuffer with Devils in the blackneſs of darkneſs for ever, the perpetual gnawings of the worm that dieth not, and the extream torments of unquenchable fire. *Seeing then theſe things cannot be denied, thou muſt be guilty of ſuch woful abuſes of reaſon as far exceed all the extravagancies of them that want it: Thou muſt be moſt groſly fooliſh, moſt unnaturally cruel to thine own ſoul, to thy whole ſelf, if thou doſt not earneſtly deſire to be one of thoſe unto whom the Lord ſhall ſay,* Come ye bleſſed, *and not,* Depart ye curſed; *if thou doſt not readily welcome, and diligently uſe any proper helps for the avoiding of the heavieſt, endleſs miſery, and for the attaining of the pureſt, vaſteſt everlaſting happineſs. And ſuch helps are now offered thee in this little book, which hath a taking tincture of the excellent Author's flaming love to God, and uſeful charity to the ſouls of men; and now it is in thine hand, let me tell thee, it cannot be refuſed the reading, or read without doing what it ſo plainly teacheth, and affectionately urgeth, but at thy greateſt peril.*

peril. If thou wilt not be at a ſmall expence of time and pains to read it over, if after the neglect of ſo many means of inſtruction, this alſo be rejected, how juſtly mayeſt thou be deſtroyed for lack of knowledge? *How ſoon may* the things which belong unto thy peace be hid from thine eyes? *A continued wilful* want of underſtanding, *is large ground for fear, leſt* he that made thee ſhould not have mercy on thee, and he that formed and redeemed thee ſhould ſhew thee no favour. *If thou readeſt, but doſt not practice what ſcripture and reaſon ſo pathetically plead for, the* increaſe of thy knowledge will increaſe thy ſorrow, *becauſe it will aggravate thy ſin; for* to him that knows his Lord's will how and why to do good, and doth it not, but the forbidden evil, to him 'tis heinous, inexcuſable ſin, for which he is liable to be beaten with many ſtripes, *in conſtant dreadful danger of ſeverer puniſhment. I hope therefore thou wilt peruſe ſo ſhort a diſcourſe, and art not unwilling to do it in ſuch a manner, as to grow acquainted with, and be perſuaded to thy great duty, and, which is inſeparable from it, thy greateſt advantage; and that thou mayeſt not fail thereof, is the deſign of the following directions.*

1. *Pray in the name of Chriſt as thou art and ſhalt be enabled, for the more effectual aſſiſtances of the Holy Spirit. Such is the corruption of our nature, that it utterly diſables to make a ſaving uſe of outward means, without inward aids. Unleſt the Spirit, by his powerful operations, work thee into a ſerious teachable temper, ſet home the attempts of God's meſſengers, and give them an efficacy far beyond their own, the moſt concerning truths, and weightieſt arguments can never be ſo repreſented and inforced, as to overcome thy ſenſual, worldly inclinations, reſcue thee from the dominion of ſin and Satan, and bring thee back to God. Thou muſt therefore pray, and that*

with becoming apprehenſions of the great God, due regard to the gracious Mediator, deep ſhame and ſorrow for the ſins thou confeſſeſt, ardent deſires of all the grace thou beggeſt, and faithful improvements of ſuch meaſures as thou haſt already received. And if thou thus askeſt, with fervent importunity, and perſevering conſtancy, thou wilt undoubtedly find that God bad thee not to ſeek hi face in vain: *As our Lord warrants us* to *argue*, Luke 11. If a man will not deny a friend what he is importunate for, and if a father will grant his ſon what he asks and wants, much more will thy heavenly Father give thee the Holy Spirit for all needful purpoſes, to produce all thoſe effects in thee, that are truly neceſſary for thine eternal ſalvation.

2. *Conſider ſeriouſly what thou readeſt, and work it on thy ſoul as far as thou art concerned therein. Medicines for the body will operate, though they are not thought of; but ſpiritual remedies for the mind require its cooperation with them: The cleareſt explications, fulleſt proofs, and ſtrongeſt motives about matters of neareſt and greateſt concernment, will not do the ſoul any good, unleſs by thinking it apply them, and extract their vertue; nor will the Spirit heal its lamentable diſeaſes, if his influences be not anſwered with ſuitable endeavours.* Work *then as he works in and with thee; take into moſt ſerious conſideration whatever is apt to promote thy recovery; lay thoſe things cloſeſt to heart, which are likelieſt to cure the hardneſs thereof; inculcate and urge them, and withal, cry mightily unto him*, who is able and no leſs willing to help thee, *till thou feeleſt his gentle force, and comeſt to a conquering reſolution, that thou muſt and wilt do as thou art adviſed, till thou doſt not only aſſent to the courſe propoſed, as fit to be taken, but art ſteadily determined, that it is beſt for thee, that it is abſolutely neceſſary, and muſt effectually be proſecuted, that by the grace of God thou wilt throughly change thy*

heart

heart and life, and ſo eſcape from the greateſt evil, and make ſure of the chiefeſt good.

3. *When thou haſt ſeriouſly conſidered and reſolved, proceed preſently to practice, with all thy might, and without the leaſt delay. 'Tis commonly a work of ſome time to alter the temper of the ſoul, and change the courſe of the life; and according to God's uſual methods, the longer thou haſt been accuſtomed to do evil, the more time and pains will be requiſite, to break the force of ſtubborn luſts, to weaken and ſubdue vicious habits, and to gain thoſe of grace and goodneſs; to travel back the way thou haſt gone wrong, and to get out of it, into the path of life. 'Tis well then if there be days enough before thee to do the* one thing needful; *to be ſure thou art not certain of an hour to ſpare, the loſs of ſo ſmall a part may prove the loſs of all. Beſides, if thou putteſt off thy reformation, though but for a little while, 'tis a ſign thou doſt not really intend it at all for thou purpoſeſt againſt conviction, to add ſin to ſin at preſent: And how can that conſiſt with an hearty deſign of growing good afterward? Delude not therefore thy ſelf with ſuch a deſperate cheat, but imitate the royal Pſalmiſt;* When thou haſt thought on thy ways, turn thy feet unto God's teſtimonies: Make haſt, and delay not to keep his commandments.

4. *Remember that converſion unto God is but the beginning of thy duty, that thou muſt afterwards obey him all the days of thy life, and that there is no other way to preſerve an intereſt in his favour, and a right to the great expreſſions thereof. They are the largeſt, and the laſt diſcoveries of divine grace,* That teach thee to deny ungodlineſs, and worldly luſts; to live ſoberly, righteouſly and godly in this preſent world; and ſo doing to look for the bleſſed object of thy hope: *They plainly enough warn thee againſt* drawing back unto perdition; *they threaten a* final rejection, if thou denieſt

nieſt thy Saviour in words or works? *And they oft direct and command thee to* ſeek for glory, and honour, and immortality, by patient continuance in well-doing? To be faithful unto death, whatever it coſt thee, that thy Lord may give thee a crown of Life. *Theſe may ſeem hard ſayings, but they contain nothing like a reaſonable diſcouragement: There is miſery more than enough in hell, to neceſſitate a prevention by any temporary labours, wants and ſufferings; and an abundantly ſufficient happineſs in heaven, to encourage a* ſtedfaſt *perſeverance in the work of the Lord, though it were more harſh and grievious than ſinners imagine. And even at preſent, Religion is not without a reward; yea, thou wilt find it, if thou trieſt as thou ſhouldſt, a reward to it ſelf; when the main difficulties at firſt are over, thy duty will grow daily eaſier, it will have many pleaſures mixed with it, and become at length it ſelf the greateſt. It will not abridge thy appetites of any deſirable gratifications, but give them a new delicious reliſh of the fountain from which they flow: Inſtead of the girds and twinges of a bad conſcience, and dread of an after-reckning, 'twill ſettle peace within, and fill thee with comfortable reflections, and joyful hopes; and a loving, thankful, praiſing obedience, will by degrees become thy ſweeteſt employment. Therein thou mayeſt* draw ſtill nearer to God, delight thy ſelf in, and receive from him the deſires of thine heart: *Thou mayeſt walk always in the* light of his countenance, *and feed on* his loving kindneſs, which is better than life.

In ſhort, before thou aſcendeſt to heaven, thou mayeſt be in an heaven on earth, and find by happy experience, that the way to have all thou canſt wiſh hereafter, is to be and do what is beſt for thy ſelf here.

Uſeful Queſtions, whereby a Chriſtian may every day examine himſelf.

Pſal. 4. 4. *Commune with your hearts upon your beds.*

EVery evening before you ſleep (unleſs you find ſome other time of the day more for your advantage in this work) ſequeſter your ſelf from the world; and having ſet your heart in the preſence of the Lord, charge it before God to anſwer to theſe Interrogatories.

For your Duties.

Q. 1. *Did not God find me on my bed, when he looked for me on my knees?* Job 1. 5. Pſal. 5. 3.

Q. 2. *Have not I prayed to no purpoſe, or ſuffered wandring thoughts to eat out my duties?* Mat. 15. 8, 9. Jer. 12. 2.

Q. 3. *Have not I neglected, or been very ſlovenly in the reading God's holy word?* Deut. 17. 18. Joſh. 1. 7, 8.

Q. 4. *Have I digeſted the Sermon I heard laſt? Have I repeated it over, and prayed it over?* Luke 2. 19, 51. Pſal. 1. 2. and 119. 5, 11, 97.

Q. 5. *Was there not more of cuſtom and faſhion in my family duties, than of conſcience?* Pſal. 101. 2. Jer. 30. 21.

Q. 6. *Wherein have I denied my ſelf this day for God?* Luke 9. 23.

Q. 7. *Have I redeemed my time from too long or needleſs viſits, idle imaginations, fruitleſs diſcourſe, unneceſſary ſleep, more than needs of the world?* Eph. 5. 16. Col. 4. 5.

Q. 8. *Have I done any thing more than ordinary for the Church of God, in this time extraordinary?* 2 Cor. 11. 28. Iſa. 6. 2, 6.

Q. 9. *Have I took care of my company?* Prov. 13. 20. Pſal. 119. 63.

Q. 10. *Have not I neglected or done ſomething againſt the duties of my relations as a maſter, ſervant, husband, wife, parent, child, &c.* Epheſ. 5. 22. to Chap. 6. v. 10. Col. 3. 18. to Chap. 4. v. 2.

For

Useful Questions.

For your Sins.

Q. 1. *Doth not sin sit light?* Psal. 38. 4. Rom. 7.24.

Q. 2. *Am I a mourner for the sins of the land?* Ezek. 9. 4. Jer. 9. 1, 2, 3.

Q. 3. *Do I live in nothing that I know or fear to be a sin?* Psal. 119. 101, 104.

For your Heart.

Q. 1. *Have I been much in holy ejaculations?* Neh. 2. 4, 5.

Q. 2. *Hath not God been out of mind: Heaven out of sight* Psal. 16. 8. Jer. 2. 32. Col. 3. 1, 2.

Q. 3. *Have I been often looking into mine own heart, and made conscience even of vain thoughts?* Prov. 3.23. Psal. 119. 113.

Q. 4. *Have not I given way to the workings of pride, or passion?* 2 Chron. 32. 26. James 4. 5, 6, 7.

For your Tongue.

Q. 1. *Have I bridled my tongue, and forced it in?* Jam. 1. 26. and 3. 2, 3, 4. Psal. 39. 1.

Q. 2. *Have I spoken evil of no man?* Tit. 3. 2. Jam. 4. 11.

Q. 3. *Hath the law of the Lord been in my mouth as I sate in my house, went by the way, was lying down, and rising up?* Deut. 6. 6, 7.

Q. 4. *Is there no company I come into, but I have droped something of God, and left some good savour behind?* Col. 4. 6. Ephes. 4. 29.

For your Table.

Q. 1. *Did not I sit down with no higher end than a beast, meerly to please my appetite? Did I eat and drink to the glory of God?* 1 Cor. 10. 31.

Q. 2. *Was not my appetite too hard for me?* Jude 12. 2 Pet. 1. 6.

Q. 3. *Did not I arise from the table without droping any thing of God there?* Luke 7. 36, &c. and 14. 1, &c. Joh. 6.

Q. 4. *Did not I mock God, when I pretended to crave a blessing,*

a bleſſing, and return thanks? Acts 27. 35, 36. Mat. 15. 36. Col 3. 17, 23.

For your Calling.

Q. 1. *Have I been diligent in the duties of my Calling?* Eccleſ. 9. 1 Cor. 7. 17, 20, 24.

Q. 2. *Have I defrauded no man?* 1 Theſ. 4. 6. 1 Cor. 6. 8.

Q. 3. *Have I dropped never a lye in my ſhop, or trade?* Prov. 28. 6. Epheſ. 4. 25.

Q. 4. *Did not I raſhly make, nor falſely break ſome promiſe?* Pſal. 106. 33. Joſh. 9. v. 14, &c. Pſal. 15. 4.

An Addition of ſome brief Directions for the Morning.

D. 1. *If through neceſſity or careleſneſs you have omitted the reading and weighing of theſe queſtions in the Evening, be ſure to do it now.*

D. 2. *Ask your ſelf, What ſin have I commited? What duty have I omitted? Againſt which of theſe rules have I offended in the day foregoing? And renew your repentance, and double your watch.*

D. 3. *Examine whither God were laſt in your thoughts when you went to ſleep, and firſt when you awoke.*

D. 4. *Enquire whether your care of your heart and ways doth increaſe, upon your conſtant uſing of this courſe for ſelf-examination; or whether it doth abate, and you grow more remiſs.*

D. 5. *Impoſe a task of ſome good meditation upon your ſelves while you are making ready, either to go over theſe Rules in your thoughts, or the heads of the Sermon you heard laſt, or the holy meditations for the purpoſe in the* Practice of Piety, *or Scudder's* Daily Walk.

D. 6. *Set your ends right for all that day.*

D. 7. *Set your watch, eſpecially againſt thoſe ſins and temptations that you are like to be moſt incident to that day.*

THE

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This ſame Book is printed in Large Octavo, *of a bigger Print, for eaſe of Ancient Perſons.*

Whereunto are annexed divers Practical Caſes of Conſcience, judiciouſly Reſolved.

Printed for *Tho. Parkhurſt*, &c.

An Earneſt Invitation to Sinners to turn to God, in order to their Eternal Salvation.

DEarly Beloved, and longed for, I gladly acknowledge my ſelf a Debtor to you all, and am concerned, as I would be found a good Steward to the Houſhold of God, to give to every one his portion. But the Phyſician is moſt ſolicitous for thoſe Patients, whoſe caſe is moſt doubtful and hazardous; and the Father's bowels are eſpecially turned towards his dying Child. The numbers of the unconverted ſouls among you, call for my moſt earneſt compaſſions, and haſty diligence, to pluck them out of the burning, *Jude* 23. and therefore to theſe firſt I ſhall apply my ſelf in theſe lines.

But whence ſhall I fetch my arguments, or how ſhall I chuſe my words? Lord, wherewith ſhall I woo them? wherewith ſhall I win them? Oh, that I could but tell! I would write unto them in tears, I would weep out every Argument, I would empty my veins for Ink, I would petition them on my knees; verily (were I able) I would. Oh, how thankful I would be, if they would be prevailed with to repent and turn!

How long have I travailed in birth with you? How frequently have I made ſuit to you? How often would I have gathered you? How inſtant have I been with you? This is that I have prayed for, and ſtudied for, for many years, that I might bring you to God; Oh, that I might but do it! Will you yet be intreated? Oh, what a happy man might you make

me, if you would but hearken to me, and ſuffer me to carry you over to Jeſus Chriſt.

But, Lord, how inſufficient am I for this work! I have been many a year wooing for thee, but the Damſel would not go with me. Lord, what a task haſt thou ſet me to do? Alas, wherewith ſhall I pierce the ſcales of Leviathan, or make the heart to feel that is hard as a ſtone; hard as a piece of the nether Milſtone! Shall I go and lay my mouth to the grave, and look when the dead will obey me, and come forth? Shall I make an Oration to the rocks, or declaim to the mountains, and think to move them with arguments? Shall I give the blind to ſee? From the beginning of the world was it not heard that a man opened the eyes of the blind; But thou, O Lord, canſt pierce the ſcales and prick the heart of the Sinner. I can but ſhoot at rovers, and draw the bow at a venture, and do thou direct the arrow between the joynts of the harneſs, and kill the ſin, and ſave the ſoul of a ſinner, that caſts his eyes into theſe labours.

But I muſt apply my ſelf to you, to whom I am ſent: yet I am at a great loſs. Would to God I knew how to go to work with you! Would I ſtick at the pains? God knoweth you your ſelves are my witneſſes, how I have followed you in private, as well as in publick, and have brought the Goſpel to your doors, teſtifying to you the neceſſity of the new birth, and perſuading you to look in time after a ſound and thorough change. Beloved, I have not acted a part among you, to ſerve my own advantage: your Goſpel is not yea, and nay. Have you not heard the ſame truths, from the Pulpit, by publick labours, by private letters, and by perſonal inſtructions? Brethren, I am of the ſame mind as ever, that holineſs is the beſt choice, that there is no entring into Heaven, but by the ſtreight paſſages of the ſecond birth, that without holineſs you ſhall never ſee God, *Heb.* 12. 14. Ah, my beloved! refreſh my

bowels

bowels in the Lord. *If there be any conſolation in Chriſt, any comfort of love, any fellowſhip of the Spirit, any bowels and mercies, fulfil you my joy.* Now give your ſelves unto the Lord, 2 *Cor.* 8. 5. Now ſet your ſelves to ſeek him. Now ſet up the Lord Jeſus in your hearts, and ſet him up in your houſes: Now come in and kiſs the Son, *Pſal.* 2. 12. and embrace the tenders of mercy. Touch his Scepter and live; why will you die? I beg not for my ſelf; but fain I would have you happy: This is the prize I run for, and the white I aim at. My ſoul's deſire and prayer for you is, that you may be ſaved, *Rom.* 10. 1.

The famous *Lycurgus*, having inſtituted moſt ſtrict and wholeſome Laws for his people, told them he was neceſſitated to go a Journey from them, and got them to bind themſelves in an Oath, that his Laws ſhould be obſerved till his return. This done, he went into a voluntary baniſhment, and never returned more, that they might, by vertue of their Oath, be engaged to the perpetual obſerving of his Laws. Methinks I ſhould be glad of the hard conditions which he endured (though I love you tenderly) ſo I might but hereby engage you throughly to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Dearly beloved, would you rejoyce the heart of your Miniſter? Why then, embrace the Counſels of the Lord by me: forego your ſins: ſet to prayer: up with the Worſhip of God in your families: keep at a diſtance from the corruptions of the times. What greater joy to a Miniſter, than to hear of ſouls born unto Chriſt by him, and that his Children walk in the Truth? 2 *John* 4.

Brethren, I beſeech you ſuffer friendly plainneſs and freedom with you in your deepeſt concernments. I am not playing the Orator to make a learned ſpeech to you, nor dreſſing my diſh with eloquence, wherewith to pleaſe you. Theſe lines are upon a

weighty errand indeed, *viz.* to convince, and convert, and to ſave you, I am not bating my hook with Rhetorick, nor fiſhing for your applauſe, but for your ſouls. My work is not to pleaſe you, but to ſave you; nor is my buſineſs with your fancies, but your hearts. If I have not your hearts, I have nothing. If I were to pleaſe your ears I could ſing another ſong. If I were to preach my ſelf, I would ſteer another courſe? I could then tell you a ſmoother tale: I would make you pillows, and ſpeak you peace; for how can *Ahab* love this *Micaiah* that always propheſies evil concerning him? 1 *Kin.* 22. 8. But how much better are the wounds of a Friend, than the fair ſpeeches of the Harlot, who flattereth with her lips, till the Dart ſtrike through the liver, and hunteth for the precious life? *Prov.* 7 21, 22, 23. and *Prov.* 6. 26. If I were to quiet a crying infant, I might ſing him to a pleaſant mood, and rock him aſleep. But when the Child is fallen into the Fire, the parent takes another courſe; he will not go to ſtill him with a ſong or trifle. I know if we ſpeed not with you, you are loſt. If we cannot get your conſent to ariſe, and come away, you periſh for ever. No Converſion, and no Salvation: I muſt get your good will, or leave you miſerable.

But here the difficulty of my work again recurs upon me, *Lord chooſe my ſtones out of the rock,* 1 Sam. 17. 40, 35. *I come in the name of the Lord of Hoſts the God of the Armies of* Iſrael. *I come forth like the ſtripling* Goliah, *to wreſtle, not with fleſh and blood, but with Principalities and Powers, and the Rulers of the darkneſs of this world,* Eph. 6.12. *This day let the Lord ſmite the Philiſtine, and ſpoil the ſtrong man of his Armour and give me to fetch off the captives out of his hand. Lord chooſe my words, chooſe my weapons for me, and when I put my hand into the bag, and take thence a ſtone and ſling it, do thou carry it to the mark and make it ſink, not into*

the

the forehead, 1 Sam. 17.49. *but the heart of the unconverted ſinner, and ſmite him to the ground, with* Saul *in his ſo happy fall*, Acts 9.4. *Thou haſt ſent me, as* Abraham *did* Eliazer, *to take wife unto my maſter thy Son*, Gen. 24.4. *But my diſcouraged ſoul is ready to fear the woman will not be willing to follow me. O Lord God of my maſter, I pray thee ſend me good ſpeed this day, and ſhew kindneſs to my maſter, and ſend thine Angel before me, and proſper my way that I may take a wife unto thy ſon*, Gen. 24.12. *That as thy ſervant reſted not till he had brought* Iſaac *and* Rebekah *together, ſo I may be ſucceſsful to bring Chriſt and the ſouls of my people together before we part.*

But I turn me unto you. Some of you do not know what I mean by converſion, and in vain ſhall I perſwade you to that which you do not underſtand, and therefore for your ſakes, I ſhall ſhew *what this Converſion is.* Others do cheriſh ſecret hopes of mercy, though they continue as they be; and for them I muſt ſhew the *neceſſity of Converſion.* Others are like to harden themſelves with a vain conceit, that they are coverted already, unto them I muſt ſhew the marks *of the unconverted.* Others becauſe they feel no harm, fear none, and ſo ſleep upon the top of the maſt; to them I ſhall ſhew *the miſery of the unconverted.* Others ſit ſtill becauſe they ſee not their way out; to them I ſhall ſhew *the means of converſion.* And finally for the quickning of all, I ſhall cloſe with *the motives of converſion.*

Chap. I. *Shewing the Negative, what Converſion is not, and correcting ſome miſtakes about it.*

LET the blind *Samaritans* worſhip they know not what, *Joh.* 4.22. Let the Heathen *Athenians* ſuperſcribe their Altar unto the unknown God, *Act.* 17.23. Let the guileful *Papiſts* commend the

mother of deſtruction, *Hoſ.* 4. 6. for the mother of devotion: they that know man's conſtitution, and the nature of the reaſonable ſouls operation, cannot but know that the underſtanding having the Empire in the ſoul, he that will go rationally to work, muſt labour to let in the light here. *Ignorantis non eſt conſenſus.* And therefore that you may not miſtake me, I ſhall ſhew you what I mean by the Converſion I perſwade you to endeavour after.

It is ſtoried, that when *Jupiter* let down the golden Chaplets from Heaven, all of them but one were ſtolen: Whereupon (leſt they ſhould loſe a relique of ſo great eſteem) they made five others ſo like it, that if any were ſo wickedly minded, as to ſteal that alſo, they ſhould not be able to diſcern which was it. And truly my beloved, the Devil hath made many counterfeits of this Converſion; and cheats one with this and another with that; and ſuch a Craft and Artifice he hath, in this myſtery of deceits; (that if it were poſſible) he would deceive the very Elect. Now that I may cure the damnable miſtakes of ſome, who think they are converted when they are not, as well as remove the troubles, and fears of others, that think they are not converted when they are; I ſhall ſhew you the nature of Converſion, both negatively, or what it is not; and poſitively what it is.

We will begin with the Negative.

1. *It is not the taking on us the Profeſſion of Chriſtianity.* Doubtleſs Chriſtianity is more than a Name. If we will hear *Paul*, it lies not in word, but in power, 1 *Cor.* 4. 20. if to ceaſe to be Jews and Pagans, and to put on the Chriſtian profeſſion had been true Converſion, (as this is all, that ſome would have to be underſtood by it) who better Chriſtians than they of *Sardis* and *Laodicea?* Theſe were alll Chriſtians by profeſſion, and had a name to live, but be-

cauſe

cauſe they had but a Name, are condemned by Chriſt, and threatned to be ſpewed out, *Rev.*3.1,16. Are there not many that name the name of the Lord Jeſus, that yet depart not from iniquity? 2 *Tim.*2.19. and profeſs they know God, but in works deny him? *Tit.*1.16. And will God receive theſe for true Converts, becauſe turned to the Chriſtian Religion? What! Converts from ſin, when yet they do live in ſin? 'Tis a viſible contradiction. Surely, if the lamp of profeſſion would have ſerved the turn, the fooliſh Virgins had never been ſhut out, *Matt.* 25. 3, 12. We find not only profeſſors, but Preachers of Chriſt, and wonder-workers turned off, becauſe evil workers, *Matth.* 7. 22, 23

2. *It is not the being waſhed in the laver of Regeneration*, or putting on the badge of Chriſt in Baptiſm. Many take the preſs-money, and wear the Livery of Chriſt, that yet never ſtand to their colours, nor follow their leader. *Ananias* and *Saphira*, and *Magus*, were baptized, as well as the reſt. How fondly do many miſtake here, deceiving, and being deceived! dreaming that effectual grace is neceſſarily tied to the external adminiſtration of Baptiſm (which, what is it, but to revive the Popiſh Tenent, of the Sacraments working grace, *ex opere operato?*) and ſo every Infant ſhall be regenerated, not only (*Sacramento tenus*) ſacramentally, but really and properly. Hence men do fancy, that being regenerated already, when baptized, they need no farther work.

But if this were ſo, then all that were baptized (in their Infancy) muſt neceſſarily be ſaved? becauſe the promiſe of pardon and ſalvation is made to converſion and regeneration.

Acts 3.19. 1 *Pet.*3.4. *Matth.* 19.28. Our calling, ſanctification (as to the beginnings of it) or converſion (which are but the ſame things, under different conceptions and expreſſions) is but a middle

link in the golden chain, faſtned to election at the one end, and glorification at the other, *Rom.* 8. 30. 2 *Theſſ.* 2. 13. 1 *Pet.* 1. 2. The ſilver cord may not be broken, nor the connexion between ſanctification and ſalvation, between grace and glory, impiouſly violated, *Matth.* 5. 8. If we were indeed begotten again, it is to an inheritance incorruptible, reſerved in heaven for us, and the divine power is engaged to keep us for it, 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. And if the very regenerate may periſh at laſt in their ſins, we will no more ſay, that he that is born of God, his ſeed remaineth in him, and that he cannot ſin, 1 *Joh.* 3. 9. *i. e.* unto death, nor that it is impoſſible to deceive the very Elect, *Matth.* 24. 24.

And indeed, were this true, then we need look no farther to ſee our names written in heaven, than only to ſearch the Regiſter, and ſee whether we were baptized: Then I would keep the Certificate of my Baptiſm, as my faireſt evidence for heaven, and ſhould come by aſſurance of my gracious ſtate, with a wet finger: Then men ſhould do well to carry but a Certificate of their Baptiſm, under the Regiſter's hand, when they died, (as the Philoſopher would be buried with the Biſhop's Bond in his hand, which he had given him, for receiving his alms in another world;) and upon ſight of this, there were no doubt of their admiſſion into heaven.

In ſhort, if there be no more neceſſary to converſion or regeneration, than to be turned to the Chriſtian Religion, or to be baptized in infancy, this will fly directly in the face of that Scripture, *Matth.* 7. 14. as well as multitudes of others. For firſt, We will then no more ſay, *ſtrait is the gate, and narrow is the Way*; for if all that were baptized, and of true Religion, are ſaved, the door is become heavenly wide, and we will henceforth ſay, Wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth unto life; for if this be true, whole

whole Pariſhes, yea whole Countries, and whole Kingdoms may go in a breaſt, and we will no more teach, that the righteous is ſcarcely ſaved, or that there is need of ſuch a ſtir in taking the Kingdom of Heaven by violence, and ſtriving to enter in. Surely if the way be ſo eaſie as many make it, that there is little more neceſſary, than to be regenerated in our baptiſm, and cry God mercy, and be abſolved by the Miniſter at our end; 'tis more ado than needs to put our ſelves to ſuch running, and ſeeking, and knocking, and fighting, and wreſtling, as the word requires as neceſſary to Salvation. Secondly, if this be true, we will no more ſay, *Few there be that find it*; yea we will rather ſay, *Few there be that miſs it*: we will no more ſay, that of the many that are called, *but few are choſen*, *Mat.* 22. 14. *and that* even of the profeſſing *Iſrael, but a remnant ſhall be ſaved*, *Rom.* 11. 5. If this Doctrine be true, we will not ſay any more with the Diſciples, *Who then ſhall be ſaved?* but rather who then ſhall not be ſaved? Then if a Man be called a brother, (that is a Chriſtian) and be baptized, though he be a fornicator, or a railer, or covetous, or a drunkard, yet he ſhall inherit the Kingdom of God, 1 *Cor.* 5. 11. 1 *Cor.* 6. 9, 10.

But the *Arminian* will reply, ſuch as theſe, though they did receive regenerating grace in Baptiſm, are ſince fallen away, and muſt be renewed again, or elſe they cannot be ſaved.

I anſwer, 1. That there is an infallible connexion between regeneration and ſalvation, as we have already ſhewed, and I itch to be farther evidencing, but that 'tis againſt deſigned brevity. 2. Then men muſt be born again, which carries a great deal of abſurdity in its very face. And why may not men be twice born in nature, as well as in grace? Why not as great an abſurdity to be twice regenerated as to be

twice generated? But 3. and above all, This grants however the thing I contend for, that what ever men do, or pretend to receive in baptiſm, if they be found afterwards to be groſly ignorant, or profane, or formal, without the power of godlineſs, they muſt be born again, or elſe be ſhut out of the Kingdom of God. So then they muſt have more to plead for themſelves, than their Baptiſmal Regeneration.

Well, in this you ſee all are agreed, that be it more or leſs that is received in Baptiſm, if (when men come to years) they are evidently unſanctified, they muſt be renewed again by a through and powerful change, or elſe they cannot eſcape the damnation of Hell. Friends and Brethren, be not deceived, God is not mocked; *Gal.* 6. 7. Whether it be your Baptiſm, or whatever elſe that you pretend, I tell you from the living God, that if any of you be Prayerleſs perſons, *John* 15. 14. or unclean, or malicious, or covetous, or riotous, or a ſcoffer, or a lover of evil company, *Prov.* 13. 20. In a word, if you are not holy, ſtrict, and ſelf-denying Chriſtians, *Heb.* 12. 14. *Mat.* 16. 24. you cannot be ſaved, except you be transformed by a further work upon you, and renewed again by repentance.

Thus I have ſhewed, that it is not enough to evidence a man to be regenerate, that he hath been baptized, effectual grace not neceſſarily accompanying Baptiſm, as ſome have vainly aſſerted. But I muſt anſwer one Objection before I paſs.

Object. The Sacraments do certainly attain their ends, where man doth not *ponere obicem*, or lay ſome obſtruction, which infants do not.

Sol. I anſwer, it is not the end of Baptiſm to regenerate. 1. Becauſe then there would be no reaſon, why it ſhould be confined only to the ſeed of Believers, for both the Law of God and the Nature of Charity,

Charity, requires us to uſe the means of Converſion for all as far as we can have opportunity. Were this true, no ſuch charity as to catch the children of Turks and Heathens, and baptize them, and diſpatch them to Heaven out of hand; like the bloody wretches that made the poor Proteſtants (to ſave their lives) to ſwear they would come to Maſs, and that they would never depart from it, and then put them forthwith to death, ſaying, *They would hang them while in a good mind.* 2. Becauſe it preſuppoſeth regeneration, and therefore cannot be intended to confer it. In all the expreſs inſtances in Scripture, we find that baptiſm doth ſuppoſe their repenting, believing, receiving the Holy Ghoſt, *Act.* 8. 37. *Act.* 2. 38. and 10. 47. *Mark* 16. 16. And to imagine, that baptiſm was inſtituted for an end of which not one of the firſt ſubjects was capable (for they were all adult perſons, and ſuppoſed to have faith and repentance according as they profeſſed, and their children were not baptized till after them, in their right) were no little abſurdity. Were this Doctrine true, Baptiſm would make diſciples; but we find it doth beſpeak them ſuch before hand, *Matth.* 28. 19. 3. Becauſe Baptiſm, being but a Seal of the Covenant, cannot convey the benefits, but according to the tenour of the Covenant, to which it is ſet.

Now the Covenant is conditional, therefore the Seal coveys conditionally. The Covenant requires faith and repentance, as the condition of the grand benefits, pardon, and life, *Acts* 16. 31. and 3. 19. And what the Covenant doth not convey, but upon theſe conditions, the Seal cannot. So that Baptiſm doth preſuppoſe faith and repentance in the ſubject, without which, it neither doth, nor can convey the ſaving Benefits; otherwiſe the Seal ſhould convey contrary to the tenour of the Covenant to which it is affixed.

3. It

3. *It lies not in a moral righteouſneſs.* This exceeds not the righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees, and therefore cannot bring us to the Kingdom of God, *Matth.* 5. 20. *Paul*, while unconverted, touching the righteouſneſs which is in the Law, blameleſs, *Philip* 3. 6. None could ſay, Black is thine eye. The Self-juſticiary could ſay, *I am no Extortioner, Adulterer, Unjuſt, &c. Luke* 18. 11. Thou muſt have ſome thing more than all this to ſhew, or elſe (however thou mayeſt juſtifie thy ſelf). God will condemn thee. I condemn not morality, but warn you not to reſt here: Piety includes Morality, as Chriſtianity doth Humanity, and Grace Reaſon; but we muſt not divide the tables.

4. *It conſiſts not in an external conformity to the rules of piety.* 'Tis too manifeſt, men may have a form of godlineſs, without the power, 2 *Tim.* 3. 5. Men may pray long, *Matth.* 23. 14. and faſt often, *Luke* 18. 12. and here gladly, *Mark* 6. 20. and be very forward in the ſervice of God, though coſtly and expenſive, *Iſa.* 1. 11. and yet be ſtrangers to converſion. They muſt have more to plead for themſelves, than that they keep their Church, and give alms, and make uſe of prayer to prove themſelves ſound Converts. No outward ſervice, but an hypocrite may do it; even to the giving all his goods to the poor, and his members to the fire, 1 *Cor.* 13. 3.

5. *It lies not in the chaining up of corruption, by education, humane laws, or the force of incumbent affliction.* 'Tis too common and eaſie, to miſtake education for grace; but if this were enough, who a better man than *Jehoaſh?* While *Jehoiadah* his uncle lived, he was very forward in God's ſervice, and calls upon him to repair the houſe of the Lord, 2 *Kings* 12. 2, 7. But here was nothing more than good education all this while; for when his good tutor was taken out of the way, he appears to have been but a wolf chained up, and falls on to Idolatry.

6. *In*

6. *In ſhort, it conſiſts not in illumination, or conviction; in a ſuperficial change, or partial reformation*: An *Apoſtate* may be a man enlightned, *Heb.*6.4. and a *Felix* tremble under convictions, *Acts* 24. 25. and a *Herod* amend many things, *Mark* 6. 20. 'Tis one thing to have ſin alarm'd only by convictions, and another to have it captivated and crucified by converting grace. Many, becauſe they have been troubled in conſcience for their ſins, think well of their caſe; miſerably miſtaking Conviction for Converſion. With theſe *Cain* might have paſſed for a Convert, who ran up and down the world, like a man diſtracted under the rage of a guilty conſcience, till with building and buſineſs he had wore it away, *Gen* 4. 13, 14. Others think, that becauſe they have given off their riotous courſes, and are broken off from evil company, or ſome particular luſt, and reduced to ſobriety and civility, they are now no other than real Converts; forgetting that there is a vaſt difference between being ſanctified, and civilized; and that many ſeek to enter into the kingdom of Heaven, *Luke* 13. 24. and are not far from it, *Mark* 12.34. and arrive to the *almoſt* of Chriſtianity, *Acts* 26.28. and yet fall ſhort at laſt. While Conſcience holds the whip over them, many will pray, hear, read, and forbear their delightful ſins; but no ſooner is this Lion aſleep, but they are at their vomit again. Who more religious than the *Jews*, when God's hand was upon them; *Pſal.* 78. 34, 35. But no ſooner was the affliction over, but they forgot God, and ſhewed their Religion to be a fit, *ver.* 36, 37. Thou mayeſt have diſgorged a troubleſome ſin, that will not ſit in thy ſtomach, and have eſcaped thoſe groſs pollutions of the world, and yet not have changed thy ſwiniſh nature all the while, 2 *Pet.* 2. 20, 22.

You may caſt the lead out of the rude maſs, into the

the more comely proportion of a plant, and then into the ſhape of a beaſt, and thence into the form and features of a man; but all the while it is but lead ſtill. So a man may paſs through divers tranſmutations, from ignorance to knowledge, from profaneneſs to civility, thence to a form of Religion; and all this while he is but carnal and unregenerate, while his nature remain unchanged.

Application. Hear then, O ſinners, hear as you would live, ſo come and hear; *Iſa.* 55. 3. Why would you ſo wilfully deceive your ſelves, or build your hopes upon the ſand? I know he ſhall find hard work of it, that goes to pluck away your hopes. It cannot but be ungrateful to you, and truly it is not pleaſing to me. I ſet about it as a Surgeon, when to cut off a putrified member from his well beloved friend; which of force he muſt do, but with an aking heart, a pitiful eye, a trembling hand. But underſtand me, Brethren, I am only taking down the ruinous houſe, (which will otherwiſe ſpeedily fall of it ſelf; and bury you in the rubbiſh,) that I may build fair, and ſtrong, and firm for ever. The hope of the wicked ſhall periſh, if God be true of his word, *Prov.* 11. 7. and wert not thou better, O ſinner, to let the word convince thee now in time, and let go thy falſe and ſelf deluding hopes, than to have death too late to open thine eyes, and find thy ſelf in hell, before thou art aware? I ſhould be a falſe and faithleſs Shepherd, if I ſhould not tell you, that you who have built your hopes upon no better grounds, than theſe fore-mentioned, are yet in your ſins. Let your Conſcience ſpeak; What is it that you have to plead for your ſelves? Is it that you wear Chriſt's livery? that you bear his Name? that you are of the viſible Church? that you have knowledge in the points of Religion; are civilized, perform religious duties, are juſt in your dealings,

have

have been troubled in Conſcience for your ſins? I tell you from the Lord, theſe Pleas will never be accepted at God's Bar. All this, though good in it ſelf, will not prove you converted, and ſo will not ſuffice to your Salvation. Oh look about you, and bethink your ſelves of turning ſpeedily and ſoundly. Set to praying, and to reading, and ſtudying your own hearts; reſt not, till God hath made thorough work with you; for you muſt be other men or elſe you are loſt men.

But if theſe be ſhort of Converſion, what ſhall I ſay of the profane ſinner? It may be he will ſcarce caſt his eyes, or lend his ears to this diſcourſe. But if there be any ſuch reading, or within hearing, he muſt know from the Lord that made him, that he is far from the Kingdom of God. May a man be civilized, and not converted? where then ſhall the Drunkard, and Glutton appear? May a man keep company with the wiſe Virgins, and yet be ſhut out? Shall not a companion of fools much more be deſtroyed? *Prov.* 13. 20. May a man be true and juſt in his dealing, and yet not be juſtified of God? What then will become of thee, O wretched man, whoſe conſcience tells thee thou art falſe in thy trade, and falſe of thy word, and makeſt thy advantage by a lying tongue? If men may be enlightned, and brought to the performance of holy duties, and yet go down to perdition for reſting in them, and ſitting down on this ſide of converſion; what will become of you, O miſerable families, that live as without God in the world? and of you, O wretched ſinners, with whom God is ſcarce in all your thoughts: that are ſo ignorant, that you cannot, or ſo careleſs, that you will not pray? O repent and be converted? break off your ſins by righteouſneſs; away to Chriſt for pardoning and renewing grace: give up your ſelves to him, to walk with him in holineſs, or elſe you ſhall never

ſee

ſee God. Oh that you would take the warnings of God! In his Name I once more admoniſh you. Turn you at my reproof, *Prov.* 1. 23. Forſake the fooliſh, and live, *Prov.* 9. 6. Be ſober, righteous, godly, *Tit.* 2. 12. Waſh your hands, you ſinners, purifie your hearts, ye double minded, *Jam.* 4. 8. Ceaſe to do evil, learn to do well, *Iſa.* 1. 16, 17. But if you will on, you muſt die, *Ezek.* 33. 11.

Ch. II. *Shewing poſitively what Converſion is.*

I May not leave you with your eyes half-open, as he that ſaw men as trees walking, *Mark* 8. 24. The word is profitable for Doctrine, as well as reproof; 2 *Tim.* 3. 16. And therefore having thus far conducted you by the ſhelves and rocks of ſo many dangerous miſtakes, I would guide you at length into the Harbour of truth.

Converſion then (in ſhort) lies, in the thorow change both of the heart, and life. I ſhall briefly deſcribe it in its nature and cauſes

1. *The Author, it is the ſpirit of God*; and therefore it is called the ſanctification of the ſpirit; 2 *Theſſ.* 2. 13. and the renewing of the Holy Ghoſt, *Tit.* 3. 5. Yet not excluding the other Perſons in the *Trinity*: For the Apoſtle teacheth us, to bleſs the father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, for that he hath begotten us again; 1 *Pet.* 1. 3. and Chriſt is ſaid to give repentance to *Iſrael*; *Act.* 5. 31. and is called the everlaſting Father, *Iſa.* 9. 6. and we his ſeed, and the Children which God hath given him, *Heb.* 2. 13. *Iſa.* 53. 10. O bleſſed Birth! Seven Cities, contended for the birth of *Homer*: but the whole Trinity fathers the new creature. Yet is this work principally aſcribed to the Holy Ghoſt, and ſo we are ſaid to be born of the Spirit, *Joh.* 3. 8.

So then it is a work above man's power. We are born,

born, not of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of man; but of God, *Joh.* 1. 13. Never think thou canſt convert thy ſelf: If ever thou wou'dſt be ſaveingly converted, thou muſt deſpair of doing it in thine own ſtrength, *Jer.* 13.18. It is a Reſurrection from the dead, *Rev.* 20. 5. *Eph.* 2. 1. a new creation, *Gal.* 6. 15. *Eph.* 2. 10. a work of abſolute omnipotency, *Eph.* 1. 19. Are theſe out of the reach of humane power? If thou haſt no more than thou hadſt by thy firſt birth, a good nature, a meek and chaſte temper, *&c.* thou art a very ſtranger to true Converſion. This is a ſupernatural work.

2. *The moving Cauſe is Internal, or External.*

The Internal mover is only free grace. Not by works of righteouſneſs which we have done; but of his own mercy he ſaved us ——— by the renewing of the Holy Ghoſt, *Tit.* 3. 5. Of his own will begat he us, *Jam.* 1. We are choſen and called unto ſanctification, not for it, *Eph.* 1. 4.

God finds nothing in a man to turn his heart, but to turn his ſtomach; enough to provoke his loathing, nothing to provoke his love. Look back upon thy ſelf, O Chriſtian: Take thy verminous rags: Look upon thy ſelf in thy blood, *Ezek.* 16. 6. Oh, reflect upon thy ſwiniſh nature, thy filthy ſwill, thy once beloved mire, 2 *Pet.* 2. Canſt thou think, without loathing, of thy trough and draugh? Open thy Sepulchre, *Matth.* 23. 27. Art thou ſtruck almoſt dead with the helliſh damp? Behold thy putrid ſoul, thy loathſome members. O ſtench unſufferable, if thou doſt but ſenſe thy own putrifaction! *Pſal.* 14. 3. Behold thy ghaſtly viſage, thy crawling luſts, thy ſlime and corruption. Do not thine own cloaths abhor thee? *Job* 9. 31. How then ſhould holineſs and purity love thee? Be aſtoniſhed, O heavens, at this; be moved, O earth, *Jer.* 2. 12. Who but muſt needs cry, Grace! Grace!

Zech.

*Zech.*4.7. Hear and bluſh, you children of the Moſt High: O you unthankful Generation! that free Grace is no more in your mouths, in your thoughts; no more adored, admired, commended by ſuch as you. One would think you ſhould be nothing but praiſing and admiring God, whatever you are. How can you make a ſhift to forget ſuch grace, or to paſs it over with a ſlight and ſeldom mention? What but free Grace ſhould move God to love you, unleſs enmity could do it, or deformity could do it, unleſs vomit or rottenneſs could do it? How affectionately doth *Peter* lift up his hands? *Bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who of his abundant mercy hath begotten us again*, 1 *Pet.* 1. 3. How feelingly doth *Paul* magnifie the free mercy of God in it? *God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, hath quickned us together with Chriſt? by grace ye are ſaved*, Eph. 2. 4, 5.

The external Mover is the merit and interceſſion of the bleſſed Jeſus. He hath obtained gifts for the rebellious, *Pſal.* 68. 18. and through him it is, that God worketh in us what is well pleaſing in his ſight, *Heb.* 13. 21. Through him are all ſpiritual bleſſings beſtowed upon us in heavenly things, *Eph.* 1. 3. He intercedeth for the Elect that believe not, *Joh.* 17. 20. Every Convert is the fruit of his travel, *Iſa.* 53. 11. Oh, never was Infant born into the world with that difficulty that Chriſt endured for us! How emphatically he groaneth in his travail! All the pains that he ſuffered on his Croſs, they were our births-pains, *Acts* 2. 24. ὠδῖνας, the pulls and throws that Chriſt endured for us. He is made Sanctification to us, 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. He ſanctified himſelf (that is, ſet apart himſelf as a ſacrifice) that we may be ſanctified, *Joh.* 17. 19. We are ſanctified through the offering of his Body once for all, *Heb.* 10. 10.

'Tis nothing then without his own bowels, but the

the merit and interceſſion of Chriſt, that prevails with God to beſtow on us converting grace. If thou art a new creature, thou knoweſt to whom thou oweſt it, to Chriſt's pangs and Prayers. Hence the natural affection of a believer to Chriſt. The Foal doth not more naturally run after the Dam, nor the Suckling to the Dugs, than a believer to Jeſus Chriſt. And whither elſe ſhouldſt thou go? If any in the World can ſhew that for thy heart that Chriſt can, let them carry it. Doth Satan put in, doth the World court thee? Doth ſin ſue for thy heart? Why, were theſe crucified for thee? 1 *Cor.* 1. 13. O Chriſtian, love and ſerve the Lord whilſt thou haſt a Being. Do not even the Publicans love thoſe that love them? And ſhew kindneſs to them that are kind to them? *Mat.* 5. 46, 47.

3. *The Inſtrument is either Perſonal, or Real.*

The perſonal is the Miniſtry. *I have begotten you to Chriſt through the Goſpel*, 1 Cor. 4. 15. Chriſt's Miniſters are they that are ſent to open mens eyes, and to turn them to God, *Act.* 26. 18.

O unthankful world, little do you know what you are doing, while you are perſecuting the Meſſengers of the Lord. Theſe are they whoſe buſineſs is (under Chriſt) to ſave you. Whom have you reproached and blaſphemed? Againſt whom have you exalted your voice, and lifted your eyes on high? *Iſa.* 37. 23. Thoſe are the ſervants of the moſt high God that ſhew unto you the way of ſalvation, *Act.* 16. 17. and do you thus requite them, O fooliſh and unwiſe? *Deut.* 32. 6. O Sons of ingratitude, againſt whom do you ſport your ſelves, againſt whom make you a wide mouth, & draw out the tongue, *Iſ.* 57. 34. Theſe are the Inſtruments that God uſeth to convert and ſave you, and do you ſpit in the face of your Phyſicians, and throw your Pilots over board? Father forgive them, for they know what they do.

The

The Inſtrument Real is the word: We were begotten by the word of truth: This is it that enlightens the eyes, that converteth the ſoul, *Pſal.* 19. 7, 8. that maketh wiſe to ſalvation, 2 *Tim.* 3. 15. This is the incorruptible ſeed, by which we are born again, 1 *Pet.* 1. 23. If we are waſhed, 'tis by the word, *Eph.* 5. 26. if we are ſanctified, 'tis through the truth, *John* 17. 17. This regenerates faith, and regenerates us, *Rom.* 10. 17. *Jam.* 1. 18.

O ye Saints, how ſhould ye love the word? for by this you have been converted: O ye ſinners, how ſhould you ply the Word? for by this you muſt be converted: No other ordinary means but this. You that have felt its renewing power, make much of it while you live, be for ever thankful for it. Tie it about your Necks, write it upon your hands, lay it in your boſoms, *Pro.*6.21,22. When you go let it lead you, when you ſleep let it keep you; when you wake let it talk with you: Say with holy *David*, I will never forget thy precepts, for by them haſt thou quickned me, *Pſal.* 119. 93. You that are unconverted, read the word with diligence, flock to it where powerfully preached, fill the porches, as the multitude of the impotent, blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water, *John* 5. 3. Pray for the coming of the ſpirit in the word. Come off thy knees to the Sermon; and come to thy knees from the Sermon. The ſeed doth not proſper, becauſe not watred by prayers and tears, nor covered by meditation.

4. *The final cauſe is mans Salvation, and Gods glory.* We are choſen through ſanctification to ſalvation, 2 *Theſ.* 2.13. Called that we might be glorified, *Rom.* 8. 30. but eſpecially, that God might be glorified, *Iſa.* 60. 21. that we ſhould ſhew forth his praiſes, 1 *Pet.* 2. 9. and be fruitful in good works, *Col.* 1. 10. O Chriſtian, do not forget the end of thy Calling, let

let thy light ſhine, *Mat.* 5. 16. Let thy Lamp burn, let thy Fruits be good, and many, and in ſeaſon *Pſal.* 1. 3. Let all thy deſigns fall in with God's that he may be magnified in thee, *Phil.* 1. 20. Why ſhould God repent that he hath made thee a Chriſtian, as in the time of the old world, that he made them men? *Gen.* 6. 6. Why ſhouldſt thou be an eyeſore in his Orchard, *Luke* 7. by thy unfruitfulneſs? or a ſon that cauſeth ſhame, as it were a grief to thy father, and a bitterneſs to her that bare thee? *Prov.* 17. 25. *Prov.* 10. 5. O let the Womb bleſs thee that bare thee, *Prov.* 17. 21. He that begets a fool doth it to his ſorrow; and the Father of a fool hath no joy.

5. *The ſubject is the elect ſinner, and that in all his parts and powers, members, and mind.* Whom God predeſtinates, them only he calls, *Rom.* 8. 30. None are drawn to Chriſt by their calling, nor come to him by believing, but his Sheep, thoſe whom the father hath given him, *John* 6. 37, 44. Effectual calling runs parallel with eternal election, 2 *Pet.* 1. 10.

Thou beginneſt at the wrong end, if thou diſputeſt firſt about thine election. Prove thy Converſion, and then never doubt of thine election. Or canſt thou not yet prove it? Set upon a preſent and thorough turning. Whatever God's purpoſes be, (which are ſecret) I am ſure his promiſes are plain. How deſperately do rebels argue. If I am elected I ſhall be ſaved, do what I will; if not, I ſhall be damned, do what I can. Perverſe ſinner, wilt thou begin where thou ſhouldeſt end? Is not the word before thee? What ſaith it? *Repent and be converted, that your ſins may be blotted out*, Acts 3. 19. *If you mortifie the deeds of the body, you ſhall live*, Rom. 8. 13. *Believe and be ſaved*, Acts 16. 31. What can be plainer? Do not ſtand ſtill, diſputing about thine election,

on, but ſet to repenting and believing. Cry to God for converting grace. Revealed things belong to thee, in theſe buſie thy ſelf. 'Tis juſt (as one well ſaid) that they that will not feed on the plain food of the word, ſhould be choaked with the bones. *Whatever* God's *purpoſes* be, *I am ſure* his *promiſes be true.* Whatever the decrees of Heaven be, I am ſure, that if I repent and believe I ſhall be ſaved; and that if I repent not, I ſhall be damned. Is not here plain ground for thee? and wilt thou yet run upon the rocks?

More particularly, this change of converſion paſſes throughout the whole ſubject. A carnal perſon may have ſome Shreds of good morality, a little near the liſt, but he is never good throughout the whole cloth, the whole body of Holineſs and Chriſtianity; Feel him a little further near the ridge, and you ſhall ſee him to be but a deceitful piece. Converſion is no repairing of the old building, but it takes all down, and erects a new ſtructure: it is not the putting in a patch, or ſowing on a liſt of holineſs? but with the true Convert, holineſs is woven into all his powers, principles, and practice. The ſincere Chriſtian is quite a new fabrick, from the foundation to the Top-ſtone, all fire new. He is a new man, *Eph.* 4. 24. a new Creature. All things are become new, 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. Converſion is a deep work; a heart work, *Act.* 2. 37. and 6. 14. it turns all upſide down, and makes a man be in a new world. It goes throughout with Men, throughout the mind, throughout the Members, throughout the Motions of the whole Life.

1. *Throughout the Mind.* It makes an univerſal change within. Firſt, it turns the ballance of the judgment, ſo that God and his Glory do weigh down all carnal and worldly intereſt, *Act.* 20. 24. *Phil.* 1. 20. *Pſal.* 73. 25. It opens the eye of the mind, and makes the Scales of its Native Ignorance

to

to fall off, and turns men from darkneſs to light, *Acts* 26. 18. *Eph.* 5. 8. 1 *Pet.* 2. 9. The man that before ſaw no danger in his condition, now concludes himſelf loſt, and for ever undone, *Acts* 2. 37. except renewed by the power of Grace. He that formerly thought there was little hurt in ſin, now comes to ſee it to be the chief of evils; he ſees the unreaſonableneſs, unrighteouſneſs, the deformity and filthineſs that is in ſin? ſo that he is affrighted with it, loaths it, dreads it, flies it, and even abhors himſelf for it, *Rom.* 7. 15. *Job* 42. 6. *Ezek.* 36. 31. He that could ſee little ſin in himſelf, and could find no matter for confeſſion (as it was ſaid of that learned Ignoramus *Bellarmine*, who, it ſeems, while he knew ſo much abroad, was a miſerable ſtranger to himſelf) that when he was to be confeſſed by the Prieſt, could not remember any thing to confeſs? but was fain to run back to the ſins of his youth: I ſay, he that could not find matter for confeſſion, unleſs it were ſome few groſs and ſtaring evils, now ſin reviveth with him, *Rom.* 7. 9. he ſees the rottenneſs of his heart, and deſperate and deep pollution of his whole nature: he cries, unclean, unclean, *Levit.* 13. 45. Lord, purge me with Hyſop, waſh me throughly, create in me a new heart, *Pſal.* 51. 2, 7, 10. He ſees himſelf altogether become filthy, *Pſal.* 14. 3. corrupt, both root and tree, *Matth.* 7. 17, 18. he writes unclean upon all his parts and powers, and performances, *Iſa.* 64. 6. *Rom.* 7. 18. He diſcovers the naſty corners that he was never aware of, and ſees the blaſphemy, and theft, and murder, and adultry that is in his heart, which before he was ignorant of. Heretofore he ſaw no form nor comelineſs in Chriſt, no beauty, that he ſhould deſire him; but now he finds the hid treaſure, and will ſell all, to buy this field. Chriſt is the pearl he ſeeks, ſin the puddle he loaths.

Now

Now, according to this new light, the man is of another mind, another judgment, than before he was: Now God is all with him, he hath none in heaven, nor in earth, like him, *Pſal.* 73. 25. He prefers him truly before all the world: his favour is his life; the light of his countenance is more than corn, or wine, and oil, (the good that formerly enquired after, and ſet his heart upon, *Pſal.* 4. 6, 7.) Now, let all the world be ſet on one ſide, and God alone on the other. Let the Harlot put on her paint and gallantry, and preſent her ſelf to the Soul (as when Satan would have tempted our Saviour with her) in all the glory of her kingdoms, yet the ſoul will not fall down and worſhip her, but will prefer a naked, yea a crucified, perſecuted Chriſt before her, *Philip* 3. 8. 1 *Cor.* 2. 2. Not but that a hypocrite may come to yield a general aſſent to this, that God is the chief good: yea, the wiſer Heathens (ſome few of them) have at laſt ſtumbled upon this; but there is a difference between the abſolute, and comparative judgment of the underſtanding. No hypocrite comes ſo far, as to look upon God as the moſt deſirable and ſuitable good to him, and thereupon to acquieſe in him. This was the Convert's voice, *The Lord is my portion, ſaith my ſoul: Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth, that I deſire beſides thee. God is the ſtrength of my heart, and my portion for ever.* Pſal. 73. 25, 26. Lam. 3. 24.

Secondly, It turns the byaſs of the Will, both as to means and end. (1) *The intention of the Will is altered,* Ezek. 36. 26. Jer. 31. 33. Eſay 26. 8, 9. Now the man hath new ends, and deſigns: Now he intends God above all, and deſires and deſigns nothing in all the world ſo much, as that Chriſt may be magnified in him, *Philip.* 1. 20. He accounts himſelf more happy in this, than in all that the earth could yield, that he may be ſerviceable to Chriſt, and bring him glory in

in this generation. This is the mark he aims at, that the name of Jeſus may be great in the world, and that all the ſheaves of his brethren may bow to this ſheaf.

Reader, Doſt thou view this, and never ask thy ſelf, whether it be thus with thee? Pauſe a while, and breathe on this great concernment.

2. *The Election alſo is changed*, ſo that he chuſeth another way, *Pſal.* 119. 13. He pitcheth upon God, as his bleſſedneſs; and upon Chriſt, as the principal; and holineſs, as the ſubordinate means to bring him to God, *John* 14. 6. *Rom.* 2. 7. He chuſeth Jeſus for his Lord, *Col.* 2. 6. He is not merely forced into Chriſt by the ſtorm, nor doth he take Chriſt for bare neceſſity; as the man begged from the gallows, when he takes the wife, rather than the halter; but he comes off freely in the choice. This match is not made in a fright, as with the terrified conſcience, or dying ſinner, that will ſeemingly do any thing for Chriſt, but doth only take Chriſt, rather than hell; but he deliberately reſolves, that Chriſt is his beſt choice, *Philip.* 1. 23. and would rather have him to chuſe, than all the good of this world, might he enjoy it while he would. Again, He takes holineſs for his path; he doth not, out of mere neceſſity, ſubmit to it, but he likes and loves it: *I have choſen the way of thy precepts*, Pſal. 119. 173. He takes God's teſtimonies, not as his bondage, but as his heritage; yea, his heritage for ever, *v.* 111. He counts them not his burthen, but his bliſs; not his cords, but his cordials, 1 *John* 5. 3. *Pſal.* 119. 14, 16, 17. He doth not only bear, but take up Chriſt's yoak: He takes not holineſs as the ſtomach doth the loathed potion, (which it will down with, rather than die,) but as the hungry doth his beloved food: No time paſſeth ſo ſweetly with him (when he is himſelf) as that he ſpends in the exerciſes of holineſs; theſe are both his

aliment, and element; the deſire of his eyes, and the joy of his heart, *Job* 23. 12. *Pſal.* 119. 82, 131, 162, 174. *Pſal.* 63. 5.

Put thy Conſcience to it as thou goeſt, whether thou art the man: O happy man, if this be thy caſe! But ſee thou be thorow and impartial in the ſearch. Thirdly, *It turns the bent of the affections*, 2 Cor. 7. 11. Theſe run all in a new channel: The *Jordan* is now driven back, and the water runs upwards againſt its natural courſe.

Chriſt is his *Hope*, 1 *Tim.* 1. 1. this is his prize, *Phil.* 3. 8. here his eye is, here his heart is. He is contented to caſt all over-board (as the Merchant in the ſtorm, ready to periſh) ſo he may but keep this Jewel.

The firſt of his *deſires* is, not after gold, but grace, *Phil.* 3. 13. He hungers after it, he ſeeks it as ſilver, he digs for it as for hid treaſure: He had rather be gracious, than be great; he had rather be the holieſt man on earth, than the moſt learned, the moſt famous, moſt proſperous. While carnal, he ſaid, Oh, if I were but in great eſteem, and rolled in wealth, and ſwimmed in pleaſure, if my debts were paid, and I and mine provided for! then I were a happy man: But now the tune is changed; Oh, ſaith the Convert, if I had but my corruptions ſubdued, if I had ſuch meaſures of grace, ſuch fellowſhip with God, tho' I were poor and deſpiſed, I ſhould not care, I ſhould account my ſelf a bleſſed man. Reader, Is this the language of thy ſoul?

His *Joys* are changed. He rejoyceth in the ways of God's teſtimonies, as much as in all riches, *Pſal.* 119. 14. He delights in the Law of the Lord, wherein once he had little favour. He hath no ſuch joy, as in the thoughts of Chriſt, the fruition of his company, the proſperity of his people.

His *Cares* are quite altered. He was once ſet for the world,

World, and any ſcraps of by-time, nothing (too often) was enough for his ſoul. Now he gives over caring for the Aſſes, and ſets his heart on the Kingdom. Now all the cry is, *What ſhall I do to be ſaved? Acts* 16. 30. His great ſolicitude is, how to ſecure his ſoul. Oh, how he would bleſs you, if you could but put him out of doubt of this!

His *Fears* are not ſo much of ſuffering, but of ſinning, *Heb.* 11. 25, 27. Once he was afraid of nothing ſo much as the loſs of his eſtate, or eſteem, the pleaſure of friends, the frowns of the great: Nothing ſounded ſo terrible to him as pain, or poverty, or diſgrace. Now theſe are little to him, in compariſon of God's *diſhonour or diſpleaſure*. How warily doth he walk, leſt he ſhould tread on a ſnare? He feareth alway, he looks before and behind; he hath his eye upon his heart, and is often caſting over his ſhoulder, leſt he ſhould be overtaken with ſin, *Pſal.* 39. 1. *Prov.* 28. 14. *Eccl.* 2. 14. It kills his heart to think of loſing God's favour; this he dreads as his only undoing, *Pſal.* 51. 11, 12. *Pſal.* 119. 8. No thought in the world doth pinch him, and pain him ſo much, as to think of parting with Chriſt.

His *Love* runs a new courſe. My love was crucified (ſaid holy *Ignatius*) that is, my Chriſt. This is my Beloved, ſaith the Spouſe, *Cant.* 5. 18. How doth *Auguſtine* often pour his loves upon Chriſt? *O Eternal Bleſſedneſs*, &c.

He can find no words ſweet enough. *Let me ſee thee, O light of mine eyes. Come, O thou joy of my ſpirit. Let me behold thee, O the gladneſs of my heart. Let me love thee, O life of my ſoul. Appear unto me, O my great delight, my ſweet comfort, O my God, my life, and the whole glory of my ſoul. Let me find thee, O deſire of my heart. Let me hold thee, O love of my ſoul. Let me embrace thee, O heavenly Bridegroom. Let me poſſeſs thee.*

His *Sorrows* have now a new vent, 2 *Cor.* 7. 9, 10. The

view of his ſins, the ſight of a Chriſt crucified, that would ſcarce ſtir him before, now how much do they affect his heart?

His hatred boils, his anger burns againſt ſin, *Pſal.* 119. 104. He hath no patience with himſelf; he calls himſelf fool, and beaſt, and thinks any name too good for himſelf, when his indignation is ſtirred up againſt ſin, *Pſal.* 73. 22. *Prov.* 30. 2. He could once ſwill in it, with too much pleaſure; now he loaths the thought of returning to it, as much as of licking up the filthieſt vomit.

Commune then with *thine* own heart, and attend the common and general current of thine affections, whether it be towards God in Chriſt, above all other concernments. Indeed, ſudden and ſtrong commotions of the affections, and ſenſitive part, are oft-times found in hypocrites, eſpecially where the natural conſtitution leads thereunto; and contrariwiſe, the ſanctified themſelves are many times without ſenſible ſtirrings of the affections, where the temper is more ſlow, dry, and dull. The great enquiry is, whether the judgment and will be ſtandingly determined for God, above all other good, real or apparent; and if the affections do ſincerely follow their choice and conduct, though it be not ſo ſtrongly and ſenſibly as is to be deſired, there is no doubt but the change is ſaving.

2. *Throughout the members.* Thoſe that were before the inſtrumets of ſin, are now become the holy utenſils of Chriſt's living temple, *Rom.* 6. 16. 1 *Cor.* 3. 16. He that before made, as it were, a baud or a barrel of his body, now poſſeſſeth his veſſel in ſanctification and honour, in temperance, chaſtity, and ſobriety, and dedicated to the Lord, 1 *Theſ.* 4. 4. *Gal.* 5. 22, 23. 1 *Cor.* 6. 19, 20.

The eye that was once a wandring eye, a wanton eye, a haughty, a covetous eye, is now employed,

as

as *Mary*, in weeping over her sins, *Luke* 7.38. in beholding God in his works, *Psal.* 8. 3. in reading his word, *Acts* 8. 30. in looking up and down for objects of mercy, and opportunities for his service.

The ear that was once open to Satan's call, and that (like a vitiated palate) did relish nothing so much as filthy, as, at least, frothy talk, and the fool's laughter, is now bored to the door of Christ's house, and open to his discipline: It saith, *Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth:* It cries with him, *Veniat verbum Domini*, and waits for his word as the rain, and relisheth them more than the appointed food, *Job* 23. 12. than the honey and the honey-comb, *Psal:* 19. 10.

The head, that was the shop of worldly designs, is now filled with other matters, and set on the study of God's will, *Psal.* 1. 2. and 119. 97. and the man beats his head, not so much about his gain, but about his duty. The thoughts and cares that now fill his head, are principally, how he may please God, and fly sin.

His heart, that was a sty of filthy lusts, is now become an altar of Incense, where the fire of divine love is ever kept in, and whence the daily sacrifice of prayer and praises, and sweet incense of holy desires, ejaculations, and anhelations are continually ascending, *Psal.* 108. 1. and 119. 20. and 139. 17, 18.

The mouth is become a well of life, his tongue as choice silver, and his lips feed many: Now the salt of grace hath seasoned his speech, and eat out the corruption, *Col.* 4. 6. and cleansed the mouth from his filthy communication, flattery, boasting, railing, lying, swearing, back-biting, that once comes like the flashes proceeding from the hell that was in the heart, *James* 3. 6, 7. The *throat*, that was once an open sepulchre, *Rom.* 3. 13. now sends

forth the ſweet Breath of Prayer, and holy Diſcourſe, and the man ſpeaks in another Tongue, in the Language of *Canaan*, and is never ſo well, as when talking of God and Chriſt, and the matters of another World. His Mouth bringeth forth Wiſdom, his Tongue is become the ſilver Trumpet of his Makers Praiſe, his Glory, and the beſt Member that he hath.

Now here you ſhall have the Hypocrite halting. He ſpeaks, it may be, like an Angel, but he hath a covetous eye, or the gain of unrighteouſneſs in his hand. Or the hand is white, but his heart is full of rottenneſs, *Mat.* 23. 27. full of unmortified cares, a very Oven of Luſt, a Shop of Pride, the Seat of Malice. It may be with *Nebuchadnezzar*'s Image, he hath a Golden Head, a great deal of knowledge: but he hath Feet of Clay, his Affections are Worldly, he minds earthly things, and his way and walk are ſenſual, and carnal, you may trace him in his ſecret haunts, and his footſteps will be found in ſome by-paths of ſin. The work is not throughout with him.

3. *Throughout the Motions, or the Life, and Practice.* The new Man takes a new courſe, *Eph.* 2. 2, 3. His Converſation is in Heaven, *Phil.* 3. 20. No ſooner doth Chriſt call by effectual grace, but he ſtraightway becomes a follower of him, *Mat.* 4. 20. When God hath given the new heart, and writ his Law in his mind, he forthwith walks in his Statutes, and keeps his Judgments, *Ezek.* 36. 26, 27.

Though ſin may dwell (God knows a weariſome and unwelcome gueſt) in him, yet it hath no more Dominion over him, *Rom.* 6. 7, 14. He hath his fruit unto holineſs, *Rom.* 6. 22. and though he makes many a blot, yet the Law and Life of Jeſus is that he eyes, as his copy, *Pſal.* 119. 30. *Heb.* 12. 2. and hath an unfeigned reſpect to all God's Commandments, *Pſal.* 119. 6. He makes Conſcience even of little ſins, and little duties, *Pſal.* 119. 113. His very infirmities

infirmities which he cannot help, though he would, are his ſoul's burden, and are like the duſt in a man's eye, which, though but little, yet are not a little troubleſome. [O man! Doſt thou read this, and never turn in upon thy ſoul by ſelf-examination?] The ſincere Convert is not one man at Church, and another at home; he is not a ſaint on his knees, and a cheat in his ſhop; he will not tythe Mint and Cummin, and neglect Mercy and Judgment, and the weighty matters of the Law; he doth not pretend piety, and neglect morality, *Matth.* 23. 14. But he turns from all his ſins, and keeps all God's ſtatutes, *Ezek.* 18. 21. though not perfectly (except in deſire and endeavour) yet ſincerely; not allowing himſelf in the breach of any, *Rom.* 7. 15. Now he delights in the Word, and ſets himſelf to Prayer, and opens his hand, (if able) and draws out his ſoul to the hungry, *Rom.* 7. 22. *Pſal.* 109. 4. *Iſa.* 58. 10. He breaketh off his ſins by righteouſneſs, and his iniquities by ſhewing mercy to the poor, *Dan.* 4. 27. and hath a good conſcience, willing in all things to live honeſtly, *Heb.* 13. 18. and to keep without offence towards God and men.

Here again you ſhall find the unſoundneſs of many Profeſſors, that take themſelves for good Chriſtians. They are partial in the Law, *Mal.* 2. 9. and take up with the cheap and eaſie duties of Religion, but they go not through with the work. They are as a cake not turned, half toaſted, and half raw. It may be you ſhall have them exact in their words, punctual in their dealings; but then they do not exerciſe themſelves unto godlineſs; And for examining themſelves, and governing their hearts, to this they are ſtrangers. You may have them duly at the Church, but follow them to their Families, and there you ſhall ſee little but the world minded; or if they have a road of family-duties, follow them to them

cloſets, and there you ſhall find their ſouls are little looked after. It may be they ſeem otherwiſe religious, but bridle not their tongues, and ſo all their religion is in vain, *James* 1.26. It may be they come up to cloſet, and family-prayer; but follow them to their ſhops, and there you ſhall find them in a trade of lying, or ſome covert and cleanly way of deceit. Thus the hypocrite goes not throughout in the courſe of his obedience.

And thus much for the ſubject of Converſion.

6. " The Terms are either from which, or to " which.

1. *The Terms from which we turn in this motion of Converſion,* are *Sin, Satan, the World, and our own Righteouſneſs.*

Firſt, *Sin.* When a man is converted, he is for ever out with ſin; yea, with all ſin, *Pſal.* 119. 128. but moſt of all with his own ſins, and eſpecially with his boſom-ſin, *Pſal.* 18. 23. Sin is now the butt of his indignation, 2 *Cor.* 7. 11. he thirſts to bathe his hands in the blood of his ſins. His ſins ſet a broach in ſorrows. It is ſin that pierceth him, and wounds him; he feels it like a thorn in his ſide, like a prick in his eyes; he groans and ſtruggles under it, and not formally, but feelingly cries out, *O wretched man!* He is not impatient of any burthen, ſo much as of his ſin, *Pſal.* 40. 12. If God ſhould give him his choice, he would chuſe any affliction, ſo he might be rid of ſin; he feels it like the cutting gravel in his ſhoes, pricking and paining him as he goes.

Before Converſion, he had light thoughts of ſin; he cheriſhed it in his boſom, as *Uriah* his Lamb; he nouriſhed it up, and it grew up together with him; it did eat as it were of his own meat, and drunk of his own cup, and lay in his boſom, and was to him as a daughter: But when God opens his eyes

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by converſion, he throws it away with abhorrence, *Iſa.* 30. 22. as a man would a loathſome Toad, *which* in the dark he had hugged faſt in his boſome, and thought it had been ſome pretty and harmleſs Bird: When a man is ſavingly changed, he is not only deeply convinced of the danger, but defilement of ſin; and, Oh, how earneſt is he with God to be purified! He loaths himſelf for his ſins, *Ezek.* 36.31. He runs to Chriſt, and caſts himſelf into the fountain, for ſin, and for uncleanneſs, *Zech.* 13. 1. If he fall, what a ſtir is there to get all clean again! He flies to the Word, and waſhes, and rubs, and rinſes; labouring to cleanſe himſelf from all filthineſs, both of fleſh and ſpirit: He abhors his once beloved ſin, *Pſal.* 18. 23. as a cleanly nature doth the trough and mire, wherein he ſees the Swine delight.

The ſound Convert is heartily engaged againſt ſin: He wreſtles with it, he wars againſt it; he is too often foiled, but he never yields the cauſe, nor lays down the weapons; but he will up and to it again, while he hath breath in his body: He will never give quiet poſſeſſion, he will make no peace, he will give no quarter, he falls upon it, and fires upon it, and is ſtill diſquieting of it with continual alarms. He can forgive his other enemies, he can pity them, and pray for them, *Acts* 7. 60. but here he is implacable, here he is ſet upon revenge; he hunteth, as it were, for the precious life; his eye ſhall not pity, his hand ſhall not ſpare, though it be a right hand, or a right eye: Be it a gainful ſin, moſt delightful to his nature, or ſupport to his eſteem with carnal friends; yet he will rather throw his gain down the kennel, ſee his credit fall, or the flower of pleaſure wither in his hand, than he will allow himſelf in any known way of ſin, *Luke* 19. 8. He will grant no indulgence, he will give no toleration; but he draws upon ſin, where-ever he meets it, and frowns

upon it with this unwelcome ſalute, *Have I found thee, O mine Enemy!*

Reader, hath Conſcience been at work, while thou haſt been looking over theſe Lines? Haſt thou pondered theſe things in thine heart? Haſt thou ſearched the Book within, to ſee if theſe things be ſo? If not, read it again, and make thy Conſcience ſpeak whether or no it be thus with thee.

Haſt thou crucified thy Fleſh with its affections and luſts; and not only confeſſed, but forſaken thy ſins; all ſin in thy fervent deſires, and the ordinary practice of every deliberate and wilful ſin in thy life? If not, thou art yet unconverted. Doth not Conſcience fly in thy Face, as thou readeſt, and tell thee that thou liveſt in a way of lying for thy advantage, that thou uſeſt deceit in thy Calling, that there is ſome way of ſecret wantonneſs that thou liveſt in? why then, do not deceive thy ſelf, thou art in the gall of bitterneſs, and bond of iniquity.

Doth not thy unbridled Tongue, thy brutiſh Intemperance, thy wicked Company, thy neglect of Prayer, of hearing and reading the Word, now witneſs againſt thee, and ſay, *We are thy works, and we will follow thee?* Or if I have not hit thee right, doth not the Bird within tell them, there is ſuch or ſuch a way, that thou knoweſt to be evil, that yet for ſome carnal reſpect thou doſt tolerate thy ſelf in, and art willing to ſpare? If this be thy Caſe, thou art to this day unregenerate, and muſt be changed or condemned.

Secondly, *Satan.* Converſion binds the ſtrong man, ſpoils his Armour, caſts out his Goods, turns men from the power of Satan unto God, *Acts* 26.18. Before, the Devil could no ſooner hold up his Finger to the Sinner, to call him to his wicked Company, ſinful Games, filthy Delights, but preſently he followed, like an Ox to the Slaughter, and a Fool

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to the correction of the Stocks; as the Bird that haſteth to the Prey, and knoweth not that it is for his life. No ſooner could Satan bid him lie, but preſently he had it upon the top of his tongue, *Acts* 5.3. no ſooner could Satan offer a wanton object, but he was ſtung with luſt. The Devil could do more with him than God could: If the Devil ſay, Away with theſe Family-duties, be ſure they ſhall be rarely enough performed in his houſe: If the Devil ſay, Away with this ſtrictneſs, this preciſeneſs, he will keep far enough from it: If he tells him, there's no need of theſe Cloſet-duties, he ſhall go from day to day, and ſcarce perform them. But now he is converted, he ſerves another Maſter, and takes quite another courſe, 1 *Pet.* 4. 4. he goes and comes at Chriſt's beck, *Col.* 3. 24. Satan may ſometimes catch his foot in a trap, but he will no longer be a willing captive: He watches againſt the ſnares and baits of Satan, and ſtudies to be acquainted with his devices: He is very ſuſpicious of his Plots, and is very jealous in what comes athwart him, leſt Satan ſhould have ſome deſign upon him: He wreſtles againſt Principalities and Powers, *Epheſ.* 6. He entertains the Meſſenger of Satan, as men do the Meſſenger of Death: He keeps his eye upon his enemy, 1 *Pet.* 5.8. and watches in his Duties, leſt Satan ſhould put in his foot.

Thirdly, *The World.* Before a ſound Faith, a man is overcome of the *World*; either he bows down to *Mammon*, or idolizes his reputation, or is a lover of pleaſure, more than a lover of God, 2 *Tim.* 3. 4. Here's the root of man's miſery by the Fall; he is turned aſide to the Creature, inſtead of God, and gives that eſteem, confidence, and affection to the creature, that is due to him alone, *Rom.* 1. 25. *Mat.* 10. 37. *Prov.* 18. 11. *Jer.* 17. 5.

O miſerable Man! What a deformed Monſter hath

hath ſin made thee? God made thee little lower than the Angels; Sin, little better than the Devils, *John* 6. 70. and 8.44. A monſter, that hath his head and heart where his feet ſhould be, and his feet kicking againſt Heaven, and every thing out of place; the world, that was formed to ſerve thee, is come to rule thee, and the deceitful harlot hath bewitched thee with her inchantments, and made thee bow down and ſerve her.

But converting Grace ſets all in order again, and puts God in the throne, and the World at his foot-ſtool, *Pſal.* 73. 25. Chriſt in the heart, and the World under feet, *Epheſ.* 3.17. *Rev.* 12.1. So *Paul*, *I am crucified to the world, and the world to me*, Gal.6. 14. Before this change, all the cry was, *Who will ſhew us any (worldly) good?* But now he ſings another tune, *Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me*, and take the corn and wine whoſo will, *Pſal.* 4. 6,7. Before, his heart's delight and content was in the world; then the ſong was, *Soul, take thine eaſe; eat, drink, and be merry; thou haſt much goods laid up for many years:* But now all this is withered, and there is no comlineſs, that he ſhould deſire it; and he tunes up, with the ſweet Pſalmiſt of *Iſrael*, *The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, the lines are fallen to me in a fair place, and I have a goodly heritage.* He bleſſeth himſelf, and boaſts himſelf in God, *Pſal.*34. 2. *Lam.* 3. 24. nothing elſe can give him content. He hath written vanity and vexation upon all his worldly enjoyments, *Eccleſ.* 1. 2. and loſs and dung upon all humane excellencies, *Philip.* 3. 7, 8. He hath life and immortality now in chaſe, *Rom.* 2. 7. He trades for grace and glory, and hath a crown incorruptible in purſuit, 1 *Cor.* 9. 25. His heart is ſet in him to ſeek the Lord, 1 *Chron.* 22. 19. and 2 *Chron.* 15. 15. He firſt ſeeks the kingdom of heaven, and the righteouſneſs thereof; and Religion

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is no longer a matter by the by with him, but the main of his care, *Mat.* 6. 33. *Pſal.* 27. 4. Now the gawdy Idol is become *Nehuſhtan*, 2 *Kings* 18. 4. and he gets up and treads upon it, as *Diogenes* trampling upon *Plato*'s hangings, ſaying, *Calco Platonis faſtum*. Before, the world had the ſwaying intereſt with him; he would do more for gain, than godlineſs, 1 *Tim.* 6. 6. more to pleaſure his friend, or his fleſh, than to pleaſe the God that made him, and God muſt ſtand by, till the world were firſt ſerved: But now all muſt ſtand by; he hates Father and Mother, and life and all, in compariſon of Chriſt, *Luke* 1. 26.

Well then, pauſe a little, and look within: Doth not this nearly concern thee? Thou pretendeſt for Chriſt, but doth not the world ſway thee? Doſt thou not take more real delight and content in the world, than in him? Doſt thou not find thy ſelf better at eaſe when the world goes to thy mind, and thou art encompaſſed with carnal delights, than when retired to prayer and meditation in thy cloſet, or attending upon God's Word and Worſhip? No ſurer evidence of an unconverted ſtate, than to have the things of the world uppermoſt in our aims, love, and eſtimation, *John* 2. 15. *James* 4. 4.

With the ſound Convert, Chriſt hath the ſupremacy. How dear is this name to him? How precious is its ſavour? *Cant.* 1. 3. *Pſal.* 54. 8. The name of Jeſus is engraven upon his heart, *Gal.* 4. 19. and lies as a bundle of Myrrh between his breaſts, *Cant.* 1. 13, 14. Honour is but air, and laughter is but madneſs, and *Mammon* is fallen like *Dagon* before the Ark, with hands and head broken off on the threſhold, when once Chriſt is ſavingly revealed. Here is the Pearl of great price to the true Convert, here is his treaſure, here is his hope, *Matth.* 13. 44, 45. This is his glory, my beloved is mine, and I am his, *Gal.* 6. 14. *Cant.* 2. 16. Oh, 'tis

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ſweeter to him to be able to ſay, Chriſt is mine, than if he could ſay, The Kingdom is mine, the *Indies* are mine.

Fourthly, *Your own righteouſneſs.* Before converſion, Man ſeeks to cover himſelf with his own Fig-leaves, *Philip.* 3. 6, 7. and to lick himſelf whole with his own Duties, *Mic.* 6. 6, 7. He is apt to truſt in himſelf, *Luke* 16. 15. and 18. 9. and ſet up his own righteouſneſs, and to reckon his counters for gold, and not ſubmit to the righteouſneſs of God, *Rom.* 10. 3. But converſion changes his mind; now he caſts away his filthy rags, and counts his own righteouſneſs but a menſtruous cloth? He caſts it off, as a man would the verminous tatters of a naſty Beggar, *Iſa.* 64. 7. Now he is brought to poverty of ſpirit, *Matth.* 5. 3. complains of, and condemns himſelf, *Rom.* 7. and all his Inventory is, *Poor, and miſerable, and wretched, and blind, and naked, Rev.* 3. 17. He ſees a world of iniquity in his holy things, and calls his once idolized righteouſneſs but fleſh, and loſs, and dog's meat, and would not for a thouſand worlds be found in himſelf, *Philip.* 3. 4, 7, 8, 9. His finger is ever upon his ſores, *Pſal.* 51. 3. his ſins, his wants. Now he begins to ſet a high price upon Chriſt's righteouſneſs; he ſees the need of a Chriſt in every Duty, to juſtifie his Perſon, and juſtifie his performances; he cannot live without him, he cannot pray without him: Chriſt muſt go with him, or elſe he cannot come into the Preſence of God; he leans upon the hand of Chriſt, and ſo he bows himſelf in the houſe of his God; he ſets himſelf down for a loſt, undone man, without him: His life is hid in Chriſt, as the life of a man in the heart; he is fixed in Chriſt, as the roots of the Tree ſpread in the Earth, for ſtability and nutriment. Before, the News of a Chriſt was a ſtale

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and ſapleſs thing; but now how ſweet is a Chriſt? *Auguſtine* could not reliſh his before ſo much admired *Cicero*, becauſe he could not find the name of Chriſt; how pathetically cries he, *Dulciſſime, amantiſ. benigniſ. cariſ.* &c. *quando te videbo? quando ſatiabo de pulchritudine tua? Medit. c.* 37. *O moſt ſweet, moſt loving, moſt kind, moſt dear, moſt precious, moſt deſired, moſt lovely, moſt fair,* &c. all in a breath, when he ſpeaks of, and to his Chriſt; in a word, the voice of the Convert, is with the Martyr, *None but Chriſt.*

2. *The terms which* are either *Ultimate*, or *Subordinate* and *Meditate.*

The *Ultimate*, is God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, whom the true Convert takes, as his All-ſufficient and Eternal bleſſedneſs. A man is never truly ſanctified, till his very heart be in truth ſet upon God above all things, as his portion and chief good. Theſe are the natural breathings of a Believer's heart: *Thou art my portion*, Pſal. 119. 57. *My ſoul ſhall make her boaſt in the Lord*, Pſal. 34. 2. *My expectation is from him, he only is my rock, and my ſalvation, he is my defence: in God is my ſalvation and my glory, the rock of my ſtrength, and my refuge is in God*, Pſalm 62. 1, 2, 5, 6, 7. Pſalm 18. 1, 2.

Would you put it to an iſſue whether you be converted or not? Now then let thy ſoul and all that is within thee attend.

Haſt thou taken God for thy happineſs? Where doth the content of thy heart lie? Whence doth thy choiceſt comfort come in? Come then, and with *Abraham*, lift up thine eyes Eaſtward, and Weſtward, and Northward, and Southward, and caſt about thee, what is it that thou wouldſt have in Heaven or Earth to make thee happy. If God ſhould give thee thy choice, as he did to *Solomon*, or ſhould ſay to thee, as *Ahaſuerus* to *Eſther*, *What is*

thy

petition, and what is thy requeſt? and it ſhall be granted thee, Eſther 5. 3. What wouldſt thou ask? Go into the gardens of pleaſure, and gather all the fragrant flowers from thence: Would theſe content thee? Go to the treaſures of *Mammon*; ſuppoſe thou might'ſt lade thy ſelf while thou wouldſt from hence: Go to the towers, to the trophies of honour: What thinkeſt thou of being a man of renown, and having a name like the name of the great men of the earth? Would any of this, all this ſuffice thee, and make thee count thy ſelf a happy man? If ſo, then certainly thou art carnal, and unconverted. If not, go farther; wade into the divine excellencies, the ſtore of his mercies, the hiding of his power, the deeps unfathomable of his All-ſufficiency; Doth this ſuit thee beſt, and pleaſe thee moſt? Doſt thou ſay, *'Tis good to be here*, Mat. 17. 4. *Here I will pitch, here I will live and die?* Wilt thou let all the world go, rather than this? Then 'tis well between God and thee: Happy art thou, O man! happy art thou that ever thou waſt born: If a God can make thee happy, thou muſt needs be happy; for thou haſt avouched the Lord to be thy God, *Deut.* 26. 17. Doſt thou ſay to Chriſt, as he to us, *Thy Father ſhall be my Father, and thy God my God*, John 20. 17. Here is the turning point. An unſound Profeſſor never takes up his reſt in God, but converting grace does the work, and ſo cures the fatal miſery of the fall, by turning the heart from its Idols, to the living God, 1 *Theſ.* 1. 9. Now, ſays the ſoul, *Lord, whither ſhould I go? Thou haſt the words of eternal life*, John 6. 68. Here he centres, here he ſettles: O, 'tis as the entrance of heaven to him, to ſee his intereſt in God. When he diſcovers this, he ſaith, *Return unto thy reſt, O my Soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee*, Pſal. 116. 7. And it is even ready to breathe out *Simeon*'s ſong, *Lord, now letteſt thou thy ſervant*

vant depart in peace, Luke 2.29. and ſaith with *Jacob*, when his old heart revived at the welcome tidings, *It is enough*, Gen. 45. 28. When he ſees he hath a God in covenant to go to, *this is all his ſalvation, and all his deſire*, 2 Sam. 23. 5.

Man, is this thy caſe? Haſt thou experienced this? Why then, bleſſed art thou of the Lord: God hath been at work with thee, he hath layed hold on thy heart by the power of converting grace, or elſe thou couldſt never have done this.

The *mediate* term of converſion is either *principal*, or *leſs principal*.

The *principal* is Chriſt, the only Mediator between God and Man, 1 *Tim.* 2. 5. His work is to bring us to God, 1 *Pet.* 3.18. He is the way to the Father, *John* 14. 6. the only plank on which we may eſcape, the only door by which we may enter, *John* 10. 9. Converſion brings over the ſoul to Chriſt, to accept of him, *Col.* 2. 6. as the only means to life, as the only way, the only name given under heaven, *Acts* 4. 12. He looks not for ſalvation in any other but him, nor in any other with him; but throws himſelf on Chriſt alone, as one that ſhould caſt himſelf with ſpread arms upon the Sea.

Here (ſaith the convinced ſinner) *here I will venture, and if I periſh, I periſh; if I die, I will die here. But, Lord, ſuffer me not to periſh under the pitiful eyes of thy mercy. Intreat me not to leave thee, or to turn away from following after thee*, Ruth 1. 16. *Here I will throw my ſelf: If thou kick me, if thou kill me*, Job 13. 15. *I will not go from thy door.*

Thus the poor ſoul doth venture on Chriſt, and reſolvedly adhere to him. Before Converſion, the man made light of Chriſt, minded the farm, friends, merchandiſe, more than Chriſt, *Matth.* 22. 5. Now Chriſt is to him as his neceſſary food, his daily bread, the life of his heart, the ſtaff of his life,

life, *Philip.* 3. 9. His great deſign is, that Chriſt may be magnified in him, *Philip.* 1. 20. His heart once ſaid, as they to the Spouſe; What is thy Beloved more than another? *Cant.* 5. 9. He found more ſweetneſs in his merry company, wicked games, earthly delights, than in Chriſt. He took Religion for a fancy, and the talk of great enjoyments for an idle dream. But now, to him to live is Chriſt. He ſets light by all that he accounted precious, for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt, *Philip.* 3. 8.

All of Chriſt is accepted by the ſincere Convert: He loves not only the wages, but work of Chriſt, *Rom.* 7. 12. not only the benefits, but the *burden of Chriſt:* He is willing, not only to tread out the corn, but to draw under the yoak: He takes up the commands of Chriſt, yea, and croſs of Chriſt, *Mat.* 11. *Mat.* 16. 24.

The unſound cloſeth by the halves with Chriſt: He is all for the ſalvation of Chriſt, but he is not for ſanctification: He is for the priviledges, but appretiates not the Perſon of Chriſt: He divides the offices and benefits of Chriſt. This is an error in the foundation: Whoſo loveth life let him beware here; 'tis an undoing miſtake, of which you have been often warned, and yet none more common. Jeſus is a ſweet name, but men love not the Lord Jeſus in ſincerity, *Epheſ.* 6. 24. They will not have him as God offers, *To be a Prince, and a Saviour, Acts* 5. 31. They divide what God hath joyned, the King and the Prieſt: Yea, they will not accept the ſalvation of Chriſt, as he intends it; they divide it here. Every man's vote is for ſalvation from ſuffering, but they deſire not to be ſaved from ſinning: They would have their lives ſaved, but withal, they would have their luſts. Yea, many divide here again; They would be content to have ſome of their ſins deſtroyed, but they cannot leave

leave the lap of *Dalilah*, or divorce the beloved *Herodias*. They cannot be cruel to the right eye, or right hand; the Lord muſt pardon them in this thing, 2 *Kings* 5. 18. Oh! be infinitely tender here; your ſouls lie upon it. The ſound Convert takes a whole Chriſt, and takes him for all intents and purpoſes: without exceptions, without limitations, without reſerves. He is willing to have Chriſt upon his terms, upon any terms. He is willing of the dominion of Chriſt, as well as deliverance by Chriſt; he ſaith, with *Paul*, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Acts* 9. 6. Any thing, Lord. He ſends the blank to *Chriſt* to ſet down his own Conditions, *Acts* 2. 37. & 16. 30.

The *leſs Principal is the Laws, Ordinances* and *Ways of Chriſt*. The heart that was once ſet againſt theſe, and could not endure the ſtrictneſs of theſe bonds, the ſeverity of theſe ways, now falls in love with them, and chuſes them as its rule and guide for ever, *Pſalm* 119. 111, 112.

Four things (I obſerve) God doth work in every ſound Convert, with reference to the Laws and Ways of Chriſt, by which you may come to know your eſtates, if you will be faithful to your own ſouls; and therefore keep your eyes upon your hearts as you go along.

1. *The Judgment is brought to approve of them, and ſubſcribe to them, as moſt righteous, and moſt reaſonable*, Pſal. 119. 112, 128, 137, 138. The mind is brought to like the ways of God, and the corrupt prejudices that were once againſt them, as unreaſonable, and intolerable, are now removed. The underſtanding aſſents to them all, as holy, juſt, and good, *Rom.* 7. 12. How is *David* taken up with theſe excellencies of God's Laws? How doth he expatiate in their praiſes both from their inherent qualities, and admirable effects, *Pſalm* 19. 8, 9, 10, &c.

There is a twofold judgment of the underſtanding;

ing? *Judicium abſolutum, & comparatum.* The abſolute judgment is, when a man thinks ſuch a courſe beſt in the general, but not for him, or not under the preſent circumſtances he is in; *pro hic, & nunc.* Now a godly man's judgment is for the ways of God; and that not only the abſolute, but comparative judgment; he thinks them not only beſt in general, but beſt for him: He looks upon the rules of Religion, not only as tolerable, but deſirable; yea, more deſirable than gold, fine gold; yea, much fine gold, *Pſal.* 19. 10.

His judgments are ſetledly determined, that 'tis beſt to be holy, that 'tis beſt to be ſtrict, that it is in it ſelf the moſt eligible courſe; and that 'tis for him the wiſeſt, and moſt rational, and deſirable choice. Here the godly man's judgment; *I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right. I love thy commandments above* gold; *yea, above fine* gold. *I eſteem all thy precepts, concerning all things, to be right; and I hate every falſe way,* Pſal. 119. 127, 128. Mark, he did approve of all that God required, and diſallowed of all that he forbad; *Righteous, O Lord, and upright are thy judgments. Thy teſtimonies that thou haſt commanded, are righteous, and very faithful. Thy word is true from the beginning, and every* one *of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever,* Pſal. 119. 86, 160, 162, 163. See how readily and fully he ſubſcribes; he declares his aſſent and conſent to it, and all and every thing therein contained.

2. *The deſire of the heart is to know the whole mind of Chriſt,* Pſal. 119. 124, 125, 169. and 25. 4, 5. He would not have one ſin undiſcovered, nor be ignorant of one duty required. 'Tis the natural and earneſt breathing of a ſanctified heart: "Lord, "if there be any way of wickedneſs in me, do thou "diſcover it. What I know not, teach thou me; and "if I have done iniquity, I will do it no more. The unſound

unſound is willingly ignorant, 2 *Pet.* 3. 5. loves not to come to the light, *Job* 3. 20. He is willing to keep ſuch or ſuch a ſin, and therefore is loth to know it to be a ſin, and will not let in the light at that window. Now the gracious heart is willing to know the whole latitude and compaſs of his Maker's law, *Pſal.* 119. 18, 19, 27, 33, 64, 66, 68, 78, 108, 124. He receives with all acceptation the word that convinceth him of any duty that he knew not, or minded not before, or diſcovered any ſin that lay hid before, *Pſal.* 119. 11.

3. "The free and reſolved choice of the will is "determined for the ways of Chriſt, before all the "pleaſures of ſin, and proſperities of the world, *Pſal.* 119. 103, 127, 162. His conſent is not extorted by ſome extremity of anguiſh, nor is it only a ſudden and haſty reſolve, but he is deliberately purpoſed, and comes off freely to the choice, *Pſal.* 17. 3. and 119. 30. True, the fleſh will rebel, yet the prevailing part of his will is for Chriſt's laws and government; ſo that he takes them not up as his toil or burden, but his bliſs, 1 *John* 5. 3. *Pſal.* 119. 60, 72. When the unſanctified goes in Chriſt's ways, as in chains and fetters, he doth them naturally, *Pſal.* 40. 8. *Jer.* 31. 33. and counts Chriſt's law his liberty, *Pſal.* 119. 32, 45. *James* 1. 25. "He is "willing in the beauties of holineſs, *Pſal.* 110. 3. and hath this inſeparable mark; "That he had ra-"ther (if he might have his choice) live a ſtrict and "holy life, than the moſt proſperous and flouriſhing "life in the world, 1 *Sam.* 10. 26. There went with "*Saul* a band of men, whoſe hearts God had touched. When God toucheth the hearts of his choſen, they preſently follow Chriſt, *Matth.* 4. 22. and (though drawn) do freely run after him, *Cant.* 1. 4. and willingly offer themſelves to the ſervice of the Lord, 2 *Chron.* 7. 16. ſeeking him with their whole deſire,

2 *Chron.*

2 *Chron.* 15. 15. Fear hath its uſe; but this is not the main Spring of Motion with a ſanctified heart. Chriſt keeps not his ſubjects in by force, but is King of a willing people. They are (through his grace) freely reſolved for his ſervice, and do it out of choice, not as ſlaves, but as the Son or Spouſe, from a Spring of Love, and a Loyal Mind. In a word, the Laws of Chriſt are the Convert's Love, *Pſal.* 119. 159, 163, 167. deſire, *v.* 5, 20, 40. delight, *v.* 77, 92, 103, 111, 143. and continual ſtudy, *v.* 99, 79. *Pſalm* 1, 2.

4. *The bent of his courſe is directed to keep God's Statutes, Pſal.* 119. 4, 8, 167, 168. 'Tis the daily care of his life to walk with God. He ſeeks great things, he hath noble deſigns, though he fall too ſhort. He aims at nothing leſs than perfection: he deſires it, he reaches after it, he would not reſt in any pitch of grace, till he were quite rid of ſin, and had perfected holineſs, *Phil.* 3. 11, 12, 13, 14.

Here the Hypocrites rottenneſs may be diſcovered. He deſires holineſs (as one well) only as a Bridge to Heaven, and enquires earneſtly, what is the leaſt that will ſerve his turn; and if he can get *but* ſo much as may juſt bring him to Heaven, this is all he cares for. But the ſound Convert deſires holineſs for holineſs ſake, *Pſal.* 119. 97. *Mat.* 5. 6. and not only for Heaven's ſake. He would not be ſatisfied with ſo much as might ſave him from Hell, but deſires the higheſt pitch. Yet deſires are not enough. What is thy way and thy courſe? Is the drift and ſcope of thy life altered? Is holineſs thy trade, and religion thy buſineſs? *Rom.* 8. 1. *Mat.* 25. 16. *Phil.* 1. 20. If not, thou art ſhort of ſound Converſion.

Application. And is this, that we have deſcribed, the Converſion that is of abſolute neceſſity to ſalvation? Then be informed, 1. That ſtrait is the gate, and

and narrow the way that leadeth unto life. 2. That there be but few that find it. 3. That there is need of a divine power, ſavingly to convert a ſinner to Jeſus Chriſt.

Again, Then be exhorted, O man that readeſt, to turn in upon thine own ſelf. What ſaith Conſcience? Doth it not begin to bite? Doth it not *twitch* thee as thou goeſt? Is this thy judgment, and this thy choice, and this thy way, that we have deſcribed? If ſo, then 'tis well. But doth not thy heart condemn thee, and tell thee, there is ſuch a ſin thou liveſt in, againſt thy Conſcience? Doth it not tell thee, there is ſuch and ſuch a ſecret way of wickedneſs, that thou makeſt no bones of; Such or ſuch a duty, that thou makeſt no conſcience of.

Doth not Conſcience carry thee to thy cloſet, and tell thee how ſeldom prayer and reading is performed there? Doth it not carry thee to thy family, and ſhew thee the charge of God, and the ſouls of thy children and ſervants that be neglected there? Doth not Conſcience lead thee to thy ſhop, thy trade, and tell thee of ſome myſtery of iniquity there? Doth it not *Carry thee* to the Ale-ſhop, or to the Sack-ſhop, and round thee in thine ear for the looſe company thou keepeſt there, the precious time thou miſſpendeſt there, for the talents of God which thou throweſt down this ſink, for thy gaming, and thy ſwilling? *&c.* Doth it not carry thee into thy ſecret chamber, and read thee a curtain lecture?

O Conſcience, do thy duty: In the name of the living God, I command thee, diſcharge thine office. Lay hold upon this ſinner, fall upon him, arreſt him, apprehend him, undeceive him. What! Wilt thou flatter and ſooth him, while he lives in his ſins? Awake, O Conſcience, What meaneſt thou, O ſleeper? What! Haſt thou never a reproof in thy mouth? What! Shall this ſoul die in his careleſs neglect

neglect of God and Eternity, and thou altogether hold thy peace? What! Shall he go on ſtill in his treſpaſſes, and yet have peace? Oh, rouze up thy ſelf, and do thy work. Now let the preacher in the boſom ſpeak: Cry aloud, and ſpare not; lift up thy voice like a trumpet; let not the blood of this ſoul be required at thy hands.

Chap. III. *Of the Neceſſity of Converſion.*

IT may be, you are ready to ſay, what meaneth this ſtir? And are apt to wonder why I follow you with ſuch earneſtneſs, ſtill ringing one leſſon in your ears, *That you ſhould repent, and be converted*, Acts 3. 19. But I muſt ſay unto you, as *Ruth* to *Naomi*, *Intreat me not to leave you, nor to turn aſide from following after you*, Ruth 1. 16. Were it a matter of indifferency, I would never keep ſo much ado: Might you be ſaved as you be, I would gladly let you alone. But would you not have me ſolicitous for you, when I ſee you ready to periſh? As the Lord liveth, before whom I am, I have not the leaſt hopes to ſee one of your faces in heaven, except you be converted: I utterly deſpair of your ſalvation, *except* you will be prevailed with to turn throughly, and give up your ſelves to God in holineſs, and newneſs of life. Hath God ſaid, *Except you be born again, you cannot ſee the kingdom of God*, John 3. 3. and yet do you wonder why your Miniſters do ſo plainly travail in birth with you? Think it not ſtrange, that I am earneſt with you to follow after holineſs, and long to ſee the image of God upon you: Never did any, nor ſhall any enter into heaven by any other way but this. The converſion deſcribed, is not an high pitch of ſome taller Chriſtians; but every ſoul that is ſaved, paſſeth this univerſal change.

It

It was a paſſage of the noble *Roman*, when he was haſting with corn to the city in the famine, and the mariners were loth to ſet ſail in foul weather, *Neceſſarium eſt navigare, non eſt neceſſarium vivere:* Our voyage is of more neceſſity than our lives. What is it that thou doſt account neceſſary? Is thy bread neceſſary? Is thy breath neceſſary? Then thy converſion is much more neceſſary. Indeed, this is the *unum neceſſarium*, the one thing neceſſary. Thine eſtate is not neceſſary; thou mayeſt ſell all for the pearl of great price, and yet be a gainer by the purchaſe, *Mat.* 13 46. Thy life is not neceſſary, thou mayeſt part with it for Chriſt, to infinite advantage. Thine eſteem is not neceſſary; thou mayeſt be reproached for the name of Chriſt, and yet happy? yea, much more happy in reproach, than in repute, 1 *Pet.* 4. 4. *Matth.* 5. 10, 11. But thy converſion is neceſſary, thy damnation lies upon it: And is it not needful in ſo important a caſe to look about thee? Upon this one point depends thy making, or marring, to all eternity.

But I ſhall more particularly ſhew the neceſſity of converſion in five things; for without this,

1. *Thy Being is in vain.* Is it not pity thou ſhouldſt be good for nothing, an unprofitable burden of the earth, a wart or wen in the body of the univerſe? Thus thou art, whilſt unconverted; for thou canſt not anſwer the end of thy being. Is it not for the divine pleaſure thou art and wert created? *Rev.* 4. 11. Did he not make thee for himſelf? *Prov.* 16. 4. Art thou a man, and haſt thou reaſon? Why then bethink thy ſelf, why and whence thy being is. Behold God's workmanſhip in thy body, and ask thy ſelf, To what end did God rear this fabrick? Conſider the noble faculties of thy heaven-born ſoul: To what end did God beſtow theſe excellencies? To no other, than that thou

ſhouldeſt pleaſe thy ſelf, and gratifie thy ſenſes? Did God ſend men, like the ſwallows, into the world, only to gather a few ſticks and dirt, and build their neſts, and breed up their young, and then away? The very Heathens could ſee farther than this. Art thou ſo fearfully and wonderfully made, *Pſal.* 139. 14. and doſt thou not yet think with thy ſelf, ſurely it was for ſome noble and raiſed end.

O man! ſet thy reaſon a little in the chair. Is it not pity ſuch a goodly fabrick ſhould be raiſed in vain? Verily, thou art in vain, except thou art for God: Better thou hadſt no being, than not to be for him. Wouldſt thou ſerve thy end? Thou muſt repent, and be converted: Without this, thou art *to no purpoſe*; yea, *to bad purpoſe*.

Firſt, To *no purpoſe*. Man unconverted, is like a choice inſtrument, that hath every ſtring broke, or out of tune; the Spirit of the living God muſt repair and tune it by the grace of regeneration, and ſweetly move it by the power of actuating grace, or elſe thy prayers will be but howlings, and all thy ſervices will make no muſick in the ears of the moſt Holy, *Epheſ.* 2. 10. *Philip.* 2. 13. *Hoſ.* 7. 14. *Iſa.* 1. 15. All thy powers and faculties are ſo corrupt in thy natural ſtate, that except thou be purged from dead works, thou canſt not ſerve the living God, *Heb.* 9. 14. *Titus* 1. 15.

An unſanctified man cannot work the work of God. 1. *He hath no Skill in it.* He is altogether as unskilful in the work, as in the word of righteouſneſs, *Heb.* 5. 13. There are great myſteries, as well in the practices, as principles of godlineſs; now the unregenerate knows not the Myſteries of the Kingdom of heaven, *Matth.* 13. 11. 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. You may as well expect him that never learned the Alphabet, to read; or book for goodly muſick of the Lute, from one that never ſet his hand to an inſtrument, as,

that

that a natural man ſhould do the Lord any pleaſing ſervice: He muſt firſt be taught of God, *John* 6.45. taught to pray, *Luke* 11. 1. taught to profit, *Iſa.* 48. 17. taught to go, *Hoſ.* 11. 3. or elſe he will be utterly at a loſs.] 2. *He hath no ſtrength for it.* How weak is his heart? *Ezek.* 16. 30. He is preſently tired. The Sabbath, what a wearineſs is it? *Mal.* 1. 13. He is without ſtrength, *Rom.* 5. 6. yea, ſtark dead in ſin, *Eph.* 2. 5.] 3. *He hath no mind to it.* He deſires not the knowledge of God's ways, *Job* 21. 14. He doth not know them, and he doth not care to know them, *Pſal.* 82. 5. He knows not, neither will he underſtand.] 4. *He hath neither due inſtruments, nor materials for it.* A man may as well hew the marble without tools, or limn without colours or inſtruments, or build without materials, as perform any acceptable ſervice without the graces of the Spirit, which are both the materials and inſtruments in the work. Alms-giving is not a ſervice of God, but of vain-glory, unleſs dealt forth by the hand of divine love. What is the prayer of the lips without grace in the heart, but the carcaſe without the life? What are all our confeſſions, unleſs they be exerciſes of godly ſorrow, and unfeigned repentance? What our petitions, unleſs animated all along with holy deſires, and faith in divine attributes and promiſes? What our praiſes and thankſgivings, unleſs from the love of God, and a holy gratitude, and ſenſe of God's mercies in the heart? So that a man may as well expect the trees ſhould ſpeak, or look for Logick from the brutes, or motion from the dead, as for any ſervice holy and acceptable to God from the unconverted. When the tree is evil, how can the fruit be good? *Matth.* 7. 18.

Secondly, To *bad purpoſe.* The unconverted ſoul is a very cage of unclean birds, *Rev.* 18. 2. a ſepul-

chre full of corruption and rottenneſs, *Mat.* 23. 27. a loathſom carcaſe, full of crawling worms, and ſending forth a helliſh and moſt noiſom ſavour in the noſtrils of God, *Pſal.* 14 3. O dreadful caſe! Doſt thou not yet ſee a change to be needful? Would it not have grieved one, to have ſeen the golden conſecrated Veſſels of God's Temple turned into quaffing Bowls of drunkenneſs, and polluted with the Idol's ſervice? *Dan.* 5. 2, 3 Was it ſuch an abomination to the *Jews*, when *Antiochus* ſet up the picture of a Swine at the enterance of the Temple? How much more abominable then would it have been, to have had the very Temple it ſelf turned into a Stable, or a Sty, and to have the Holy of Holies ſerved like the houſe of *Baal*; to have the image of God taken down, and be turned into a draught houſe? 2 *Kings* 10.27. This is the very caſe of the unregenerate: All thy members are turned into inſtruments of unrighteouſneſs, *Rom.* 6. 19. ſervants of Satan; and thy inmoſt powers into receptacles of uncleanneſs, *Epheſ.*2.2. *Tit.*1.15. You may ſee the goodly gueſts within, by what comes out. *For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, falſe witneſs, blaſphemies*, &c. This black guard diſcovers what a hell there is within.

O abuſe inſufferable! to ſee a heaven-born ſoul abaſed to the filthieſt drudgery; to ſee the glory of God's creation, the chief of the ways of God, the Lord of the Univerſe, a lapping with the prodigal at the trough, or licking up with greedineſs the moſt loathſome vomit. Was it ſuch a lamentation to ſee thoſe that did feed delicately, to ſit deſolate in the ſtreets; and the precious ſons of *Sion*, comparable to fine gold, to be eſteemed as earthen pitchers; and thoſe that were cloathed in ſcarlet, to embrace dunghils? *Lam.* 4. 2, 5. And is it not much more fearful, to ſee the only thing that hath immortality

tality in this lower world, and carries the ſtamp of God, to become as a veſſel wherein there is no pleaſure, *Jer.* 22. 28. (which is but a modeſt expreſſion of the veſſel men put to the moſt ſordid uſe.) O indignity intolerable! Better thou wert daſhed in a *thouſand* pieces, than continue to be abuſed to ſo filthy a ſervice.

II. *Not only man, but the whole viſible creation is in vain without this.* Beloved, God hath made all the viſible creatures in heaven and earth for the ſervice of man, and man only is the ſpokeſman for all the reſt. Man is in the univerſe, like the tongue in the body, which ſpeaks for all the members. The other creatures cannot praiſe their Maker, but by dumb ſigns and hints to man, that he ſhould ſpeak for them. Man is, as it were, the High Prieſt of God's creation, to offer the ſacrifice of praiſe for all his fellow-creatures, *Pſal* 147. and 148, and 150. The Lord God expecteth a tribute of praiſe from all his works, *Pſal.* 103. 22. Now all the reſt do bring in their tribute to man, and pay it in by his hand. So then, if man be falſe, and faithleſs, and ſelfiſh, God is wronged of all, and ſhall have no active glory from his works.

O dreadful thought to think of! That God ſhould build ſuch a world as this, and lay out ſuch infinite power, and wiſdom, and goodneſs thereupon, and all in vain; and man ſhould be guilty, at laſt, of robbing and ſpoiling him of the glory of all. Oh, think of this! While thou art unconverted, all the offices of the creatures to thee are in vain: Thy meat nouriſhes thee in vain, the Sun holds forth his light to thee in vain, the ſtars that ſerve thee in their courſes, by their moſt powerful, though hidden influence, *Judg.* 5 20. *Hoſ.* 2.21,22. do it in vain; thy cloaths warm thee in vain; thy beaſt carries thee in vain: In a word, the unwearied labour, and

continual travel of the whole Creation (as to thee) is in vain. The ſervice of all the creatures, that drudge for thee, and yield forth their ſtrength unto thee (that therewith thou ſhouldſt ſerve their Maker) is all but loſt labour. Hence the whole Creation groaneth under the abuſe of this unſanctified world, *Rom.* 8. 22. that pervert them to the ſervice of their luſts, quite contrary to the very end of their Being.

III. *Without this, thy Religion is in vain*, Jam. 1. 26. All thy religious performances will be but loſt; for they can neither pleaſe God, *Rom.* 8. 8. nor ſave thy ſoul, 1 *Cor.* 13. 2, 3. which are the very ends of Religion. Be thy ſervices never ſo ſpecious, yet God hath no pleaſure in them, *Iſa.* 1. 14. *Mal.* 1. 10. Is not that man's caſe dreadful, whoſe ſacrifices are as murder, and whoſe prayers are a breath of abomination? *Iſa.* 66. 3. *Prov.* 28. 9. Many, under convictions, think they will ſet upon mending, and that a few prayers and alms will ſalve all again: But alas, ſirs! while your hearts remain unſanctified, your duties will not paſs. How punctual was *Jehu*? and yet all was rejected, becauſe his heart was not upright, 2 *King.* 10. *with Hoſ.* 1. 4. How blameleſs was *Paul*? and yet, being unconverted, all was but loſs, *Philip.* 3. 6, 7. Men think they do much in attending God's ſervice, and are ready to twit him with it, *Iſa.* 58. 3. *Matth.* 7. 22. and ſet him down ſo much their debtor, whenas (their perſons being unſanctified) their duties cannot be accepted.

O ſoul! Do not think, when thy ſins purſue thee, a little praying and reforming thy courſe will pacifie God: Thou muſt begin with thine heart; if that be not renewed, thou canſt no more pleaſe God, than one that having unſpeakably offended thee, ſhould bring thee his vomit in a diſh to pacifie thee; or having fallen into the mire, ſhould think

think with his loathed embraces to reconcile thee.

It is a great miſery to labour in the fire. The Poets could not invent a worſer hell for *Siſyphus*, than to be getting the barrel ſtill up the hill, and then that it ſhould preſently fall down again, and renew his labour. God threatens it, as the greateſt of temporal judgments, that they ſhould build and not inhabit, plant and not gather, and their labours ſhould be eat up by ſtrangers, *Deut.* 28. 30, 38, 39, 41. Is it ſo great a miſery to loſe our common labours, to ſow in vain, and build in vain? how much more to loſe our pains in Religion, to pray, and hear, and faſt in vain? This is an undoing and eternal loſs. Be not deceived, if thou goeſt on in thy ſinful ſtate, tho' thou ſhouldſt ſpread forth thine hands, God will hide his eyes? tho' thou make many prayers, he will not here, *Iſa.* 1. 15. If a man without Skill ſet about our work, and mar it in the doing, tho' he take much pains, we give him but ſmall thanks. God will be worſhipped after the due order, 1 *Chron.* 15. 13. If a ſervant do our work, but quite contrary to our order, he ſhall have rather ſtripes than praiſe. God's work muſt be done according to God's mind, or he will not be pleaſed; and this cannot be, except it be done with a holy heart, 2 *Chron.* 25. 2.

IV. *Without this, thy hopes are in vain*, Job 8. 12, 13. *The Lord hath rejected thy confidence*, Jer. 2. 37.

Firſt, *Thy hopes of comfort here are in vain.* 'Tis not only neceſſary to the ſafety, but comfort of your condition, that you be converted. Without this, you ſhall not know peace, *Iſa.* 59. 8. Without the fear of God, you cannot have the comforts of the Holy Ghoſt, *Act.* 9. 31. God ſpeaks peace only to his people, and to his Saints, *Pſal.* 85. 8. If you have a falſe peace, continuing in your ſins, 'tis not of God's ſpeaking, and then you may gueſs the Author. Sin is a real ſickneſs, *Iſa.* 1. 5. yea, the

worſt of ſickneſs; 'tis a leproſie in the head, *Lev.* 13.44. the plague in the heart, 1 *Kings* 8. 31. 'tis brokenneſs in the bones, *Pſal.* 51. 8. it pierceth, it woundeth, it racketh, it tormenteth, 1 *Tim.* 1. 10. A man may as well expect eaſe, when his diſeaſes are in their ſtrength, or his bones out of joint, as true comfort, while in his ſins.

O wretched man, that canſt have no eaſe in this caſe but what comes from the deadlineſs of the diſeaſe! You ſhall have the poor ſick man, ſaying in his lightneſs, he is well, when you ſee death in his face. He will needs up and about his buſineſs, when the very next ſtep is like to be into the grave. The unſanctified often ſee nothing amiſs, they think themſelves whole, and cry not out for the Phyſician, but this ſhews the danger of their caſe.

Sin doth naturally breed diſtempers, and diſturbances in the ſoul. What a continual tempeſt and commotion is there in a diſcontented mind? What an eating evil is inordinate care; What is paſſion, but a very fever in the mind? What is luſt, but a fire in the bones? What is pride, but a deadly tympany? or covetouſneſs, but an unſatiable and unſufferable thirſt? or malice and envy, but venom in the very heart? Spiritual ſloth is but a ſcurvy in the mind, and carnal ſecurity a mortal lethargy? and how can that ſoul have true comfort, that is under ſo many diſeaſes? But converting grace cures, and ſo eaſes the mind, and prepares the ſoul for a ſetled, ſtanding, immortal peace. *Great peace have they that love thy Commandments, and nothing ſhall offend them*, Pſal. 119. 165. They are the ways of wiſdom that afford pleaſure and peace, *Prov.* 3. 17. *David* had infinitely more pleaſure in the word, than in all the delights of his Court, *Pſal.* 119. 103, 127. The conſcience cannot be truly pacified, till ſoundly purified, *Heb.* 10. 22. Curſed is that peace, that

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is maintain'd in a way of ſin, *Deut.* 29. 19, 20. Two ſorts of peace are more to be dreaded, than all the troubles in the world; peace with ſin, and peace in ſin.

Secondly, *Thy hopes of ſalvation hereafter are in vain*; yea, worſe then in vain; they are moſt injurious to God, moſt pernicious to thy ſelf: There is death, deſperation, blaſphemy in the bowels of this hope. 1. *There is death in it. Thy confidence ſhall be rooted out of thy tabernacles* (God will up with it, root and branch) *it ſhall bring thee to the King of terrours*, Job 18. 14. Tho' thou mayeſt lean upon this houſe, it will not ſtand, *Job.* 8. 15. but will prove like a ruinous building, which when a man truſts to, it falls down about his ears. 2. *There is deſperation in it. Where is the hope of the hypocrite, when God takes away his ſoul?* Job 27. 8. Then there is an end for ever of his *hope*. Indeed, the hope of the righteous hath an end; but then 'tis not a deſtructive, but a perfective end; his hope ends in fruition, others in fruſtration, *Prov.* 10. 28. The godly muſt ſay at death, *It is finiſhed*; but the wicked, *It is periſhed*; and in too ſad earneſt bemoan himſelf (as *Job* in a miſtake,) *Where now is my hope? He hath deſtroyed me, I am gone, and my hope is removed like a tree*, Job 19. 10. *The righteous hath hope in his death*, Prov. 14. 32. When nature is dying, his hopes are living; when his body is languiſhing, his hopes are flouriſhing; his hope is a living hope, 1 *Pet.* 1. 3. εἰς ἐλπίδα ζῶσαν, but others a dying, yea a damning, ſoul-undoing hope. *When a wicked man dieth, his expectation ſhall periſh, and the hope of unjuſt men periſheth*, Prov. 11. 7. *It ſhall be cut off, and* prove like the *Spiders web*, Job 8. 14. which he ſpins out of his own bowels; but then comes death with the broom, and takes down all, and ſo there is an eternal end of his confidence, wherein he truſted. *For the eyes of the wicked ſhall fail, and their hope ſhall*

be as the giving up of the ghoſt, Job 11. 20. Wicked men are ſetled in their carnal hope, and will not be beaten out of it: They hold it faſt, they will not let it go. Yea, but death will knock off their fingers; though we cannot undeceive them, death and judgment will: When death ſtrikes his dart through thy liver, it will let out thy ſoul, and thy hopes together. The unſanctified have hope only in this life, 1 *Cor.* 15. 19. and therefore are, of all men, moſt miſerable: When death comes, it lets them out into the amazing gulf of endleſs deſperation. 3. *There is blaſphemy in it.* To hope we ſhall be ſaved, though continuing unconverted, is to hope we ſhall prove God a liar. He hath told you, that ſo merciful and pitiful as he is, he will never ſave you notwithſtanding, if you go on in ignorance, or a courſe of unrighteouſneſs, *Iſa.* 27. 11. 1 *Cor.* 6. 9. In a word, he hath told you, that whatever you be, or do, nothing ſhall avail you to ſalvation, without you be new creatures, *Gal.* 6. 15. Now, to ſay God is merciful, and we hope he will ſave us nevertheleſs, is to ſay, in effect, we hope God will not do as he ſaith. We may not ſet God's attributes at variance: God is reſolved to glorifie mercy, but not with the prejudice of truth; as the preſumptuous ſinner will find, to his everlaſting ſorrow.

Object. Why, but we hope in Jeſus Chriſt, we put our whole truſt in God, and therefore doubt not but we ſhall be ſaved.

Anſ. 1. *This is not to hope in Chriſt, but againſt Chriſt.* To hope to ſee the kingdom of God, without being born again; to hope to find eternal life in the broad way, is to hope Chriſt will prove a falſe prophet. 'Tis *David*'s plea, *I hope in thy word*, Pſal. 119. 81. but this hope is againſt the word. Shew me a word of Chriſt for thy hope, that he will ſave thee in thine ignorance, or profane neglects of his ſervice, and

and I will never go to ſhake thy confidence:

2. *God doth with abhorrence reject this hope.* Thoſe condemned in the Prophet, went on in their ſins, yet (ſaith the text) they will lean upon the Lord, *Mic.* 3. 11. God will not endure to be made a prop to men in their ſins: The Lord rejected thoſe preſumptuous ſinners, that went on ſtill in their treſpaſſes, and yet would ſtay themſelves upon the God of *Iſrael*, *Iſa.* 48. 1, 2. as a man would ſhake off the briars (as one ſaid well) that cleaves to his garment.

3. *If thy hope be any thing worth, it will purifie thee from thy ſins*, 1 Joh. 3. 3. but curſed is that hope, which doth cheriſh men in their ſins.

Object. Would you have us to deſpair?

Anſw. You muſt deſpair of ever coming to heaven as you are, *Act.* 2. 37. that is, while you remain unconverted. You muſt deſpair ever to ſee the face of God, without holineſs; but you muſt by no means deſpair of finding mercy, upon your through repentance and converſion; neither may you deſpair of attaining to repentance and converſion, in the uſe of God's means.

V. *Without this, all that Chriſt hath done and ſuffered will be (as to you) in vain*, Joh. 13. 8. *Tit.* 2. 14. That is, it will no way avail to your ſalvation. Many urge this as a ſufficient ground for their hopes, that Chriſt died for ſinners: But I muſt tell you, Chriſt never died to ſave impenitent and unconverted ſinners (ſo continuing) 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. A great Divine was wont, in his private dealings with ſouls to ask two Queſtions: 1. What hath Chriſt done for you? 2. What hath Chriſt wrought in you? Without the application of the Spirit in regeneration, we can have no ſaving intereſt in the benefits of redemption. I tell you from the Lord, Chriſt himſelf cannot ſave you, if you go on in this eſtate.

1. *It were againſt his truſt.* The Mediator is the Servant

vant of the Father, *Iſa.* 42. 1. ſhews his commiſſion from him, acts in his name, and pleads his command for his juſtification, *Joh.* 10. 18, 36. and 6. 38, 40. And God hath committed all things to him, entruſted his own glory, and the ſalvation of the elect with him, *Mat.* 11. 27. *Joh.* 17. 2. Accordingly, Chriſt gives his Father an account of both parts of his truſt, before he leaves the world, *Joh.* 17. 4, 6, 12. Now Chriſt ſhould quite croſs his Father's glory, his greateſt truſt, if he ſhould ſave men in their ſins; for this were to overturn all his counſels, and to offer violence to all his attributes.

Firſt, *To overturn all his counſels:* Of which, this is the order, that men ſhould be brought through ſanctification, to ſalvation, 2 *Theſ.* 2. 13. He hath choſen them, that they ſhould be holy, *Epheſ.* 1. 4. They are elected to pardon and life through ſanctification, 1 *Pet.* 1. 2. If thou canſt repeal the law of God's immutable counſel, or corrupt him whom the Father hath ſealed, to go directly againſt his commiſſion, then, and not otherwiſe, mayeſt thou get to heaven in this condition. To hope that Chriſt will ſave thee while unconverted, is to hope that Chriſt will falſifie his truſt. He never did, nor will ſave one ſoul, but whom the Father hath given him in election, and drawn to him in effectual calling, *Joh.* 6. 34, 37. Be aſſured, Chriſt will ſave none in a way contrary to his Father's will, *Joh.* 6. 38.

Secondly, *To offer violence to all his attributes.* 1. *To his juſtice:* For the righteouſneſs of God's judgment lies, in rendring to all according to their works, *Rom.* 2. 5, 6. Now ſhould men ſow to the fleſh, and yet of the ſpirit reap everlaſting life, *Gal.* 6. 7, 8. where were the glory of divine Juſtice, ſince it ſhould be given to the wicked according to the work of the righteous? 2. *To his holineſs.* If God ſhould not only ſave ſinners, but ſave them in their ſins,

ſins, his moſt pure and ſtrict holineſs would be exceedingly defaced. The unſanctified is, in the eyes of God's holineſs, worſe than a ſwine or viper, *Mat.* 23.33. 2 *Pet.*2 22. Now, what cleanly nature could endure to have the filthy ſwine bed and board with him, in his parlour, or bed-chamber? It would offer the extreameſt violence to the infinite purity of the divine nature, to have ſuch to dwell with him. They cannot ſtand in his judgment, they cannot abide in his preſence, *Pſal.* 1. 5 and 5. 4, 5. If holy *David* would not endure ſuch in his houſe, no nor in his ſight, *Pſal.* 101. 3, 7. ſhall we think God will? Should he take men as they be, from the trough, to the table; from the harlot's lips, from the ſty and draff, to the glory of heaven, the world would think God were at no ſuch a diſtance from ſin, nor had ſuch diſlike of it, as we are told he hath: They would conclude, God were altogether ſuch a one as themſelves, (as they wickedly did, but from the very forbearance of God, *Pſal.*50.21.) 3. *To his veracity:* For God hath declared from heaven, *That if any ſhall ſay, he ſhall have peace, though he ſhould go on in the imagination of his heart: his wrath ſhall ſmoak againſt that man,* Deut.29.19,20. *That they (only) that confeſs and forſake their ſins, ſhall find mercy,* Prov.28. 13. *That they that ſhall enter into his hill, muſt be of clean hands, and a pure heart,* Pſal. 24. 3, 4. Where were God's truth, if notwithſtanding all this, he ſhould bring men to ſalvation without converſion? O deſperate ſinner, that dareſt to hope that Chriſt will put the lye upon his Father, and nullifie his word, to ſave thee! 4. *To his wiſdom:* For this were to throw away the choiceſt mercies on them that would not value them, nor were any way ſuited to them. Firſt, They would not value them. The unſanctified ſinner puts but little price upon God's great ſalvation, *Matth.* 22. 5. He ſets no more by

Chriſt

Chriſt, than the whole by the Phyſician, *Matth.* 9. 12. He prizeth not his balm, values not his cure, tramples upon his blood, *Heb.*10.29. Now, Would it ſtand with wiſdom, to force pardon and life upon them that would give him no thanks for them? Will the all-wiſe God (when he hath forbidden us to do it) throw his holy things to Dogs, and his pearls to Swine, that would (as it were) but turn again, and rend him? *Matth.* 7. 6. This would make mercy to be deſpiſed indeed. Wiſdom requires, that life be given in a way ſuitable to God's honour, and that God provide for the ſecuring his own glory, as well as man's felicity. It would be diſhonourable to God, to ſet his jewels on the ſnouts of Swine, (continuing ſuch) and to beſtow his choiceſt riches on them, that have more pleaſure in their ſwill, than the heavenly delights that he doth offer. God ſhould loſe the praiſe and glory of his grace, if he ſhould caſt it away on them that were not only unworthy, but unwilling. Secondly, They are no way ſuited to them. The Divine Wiſdom is ſeen in ſuiting things each to other, the means to the end, the object to the faculty, the quality of the gift to the capacity of the receiver. Now, if Chriſt ſhould bring the unregenerate ſinner to heaven, he could take no more felicity there, than a beaſt, if *you ſhould* bring him into a beautiful room, to the ſociety of learned men, and a well-furniſhed table; whenas the poor thing had much rather be grazing with his fellow-brutes. Alas! What ſhould an unſanctified creature do in heaven! He could take no content there, becauſe nothing ſuits him. The place doth not ſuit him; he would be but *piſcis in arido*, quite out of his element, as a Swine in the parlour, or a fiſh out of water. The company doth not ſuit him: What communion hath darkneſs with light? Corruption with perfection? Filth and rottenneſs with

with glory and immortality? The employment doth not ſuit him: The Anthems of heaven fit not his mouth, ſuit not his ear. Canſt thou charm thy beaſt with muſick? Or wilt thou bring him to thy Organ, and expect that he ſhould make thee melody, or keep time with the Skilful Quire? Or had he Skill, he would have no will; and ſo could find no pleaſure, no more than the nauſeous ſtomach in the meat, on which it hath newly ſurfeited. Spread thy table with delicates, before a languiſhing Patient, and it will be but a very offence. Alas! if the poor man think a Sermon long, and ſay of a Sabbath, *What a wearineſs is it?* Mal. 1.13. how miſerable would he think it, to be held to it to all eternity? 5. *To his Immutability, or elſe to his Omniſciency, or Omnipotency.* For this is enacted in the Conclave of heaven, and enrolled in the decrees of the Court above, that none but *the pure in heart ſhall ever ſee God*, Matth. 5.8. This is laid up with him and ſealed among his treaſures. Now, if Chriſt yet bring any to heaven unconverted, either he muſt get them in without his Father's knowledge; and then where is his Omniſciency? Or againſt his will, and then where were his Omnipotency? Or he muſt change his will, and then where were his Immutability?

Sinner, Wilt thou not yet give up thy vain hope of being ſaved in this condition? Saith *Bildad*, *Shall the earth be forſaken for thee, or the rocks moved out of their place?* Job 18.4. May not I, much more, reaſon ſo with thee? Shall the laws of heaven be reverſed for thee? Shall the everlaſting foundations be overturned for thee? Shall Chriſt put out the eye of his Father's Omniſciency, or ſhorten the arm of his eternal power for thee? Shall divine Juſtice be violated for thee, or the brightneſs of the glory of his holineſs be blemiſhed for thee? Oh, the impoſſibility

ſibility, abſurdity, blaſphemy, that is in ſuch a confidence! To think Chriſt will ever ſave thee in this condition, is to make thy Saviour to become a ſinner, and to do more wrong to the infinite Majeſty, than all the wicked on earth, or devils in hell ever did, or could: And yet wilt thou not give up ſuch a blaſphemous hope?

II. *Againſt his word.* We need not ſay, *Who ſhall aſcend into heaven, to bring down Chriſt from above? Or who ſhall deſcend into the deep, to bring up Chriſt from beneath? The word is nigh us*, Rom. 10. 6, 7, 8. Are you agreed that Chriſt ſhall end the controverſie? Hear then his own words: *Except you be converted, you ſhall in no wiſe enter into the kingdom of heaven*, Mat. 18. 3. *You muſt be born again*, Joh. 3. 7. *If I waſh thee not, thou haſt no part in me*, Joh. 13. 8. *Repent or periſh*, Luke 13. 3. One word, one would think, were enough from Chriſt; but how often and earneſtly doth he reiterate it? *Verily, verily, verily, except a man be born again, he ſhall not ſee the Kingdom of God*, Joh. 3. 3, 5. Yea, he doth not only aſſert, but prove the neceſſity of the new birth, *viz.* from the fleſhlineſs and filthineſs of man's firſt birth, *Joh.* 3. 6. by reaſon of which, man is no more fit for heaven, than the beaſt is for the chamber of the King's preſence. And wilt thou yet believe thine own preſumptious confidence, directly againſt Chriſt's words? He muſt go quite againſt the law of his Kingdom, and rule of his Judgment, to *ſave* thee in this eſtate.

III. *Againſt his oath.* He hath lifted up his hand to heaven, he hath ſworn, that thoſe that remain in unbelief, and know not his ways (that is, are ignorant of them, or diſobedient to them) ſhall not enter, into his reſt, *Pſal.* 95. 11. *Heb.* 3. 18. And wilt thou not yet believe, O ſinner, that he is in earneſt? Canſt thou hope he will be forſworn for thee?

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The covenant of grace is confirmed by an oath, and ſealed by blood, *Heb.*6.17. and 9.16,18,19. *Matth.* 26. 28. but all muſt be made void, and another way to heaven found out, if thou be ſaved, living and dying unſanctified. God is come to his loweſt and laſt terms with man, and hath condeſcended as far as with honour he could, hath ſet up his pillars with a *Ne plus ultra.* Men cannot be ſaved, while unconverted, except they could get another covenant made, and the whole frame of the Goſpel (which was eſtabliſhed for ever, with ſuch dreadful ſolemnities) quite altered. And would not this be a diſtracted hope?

IV. *Againſt his honour.* God will ſo ſhew his love to the ſinner, as withal to ſhew his hatred to ſin. Therefore he that names the name of Jeſus muſt depart from iniquity, 2 *Tim.*2.19. and deny all ungodlineſs: And he that hath hope of life by Chriſt, muſt purifie himſelf as he is pure, 1 *Joh.*3. 3. *Tit.* 2. 12. otherwiſe Chriſt would be thought a favourer of ſin. The Lord Jeſus would have all the world to know, though he pardon ſin, he will not protect it. If holy *David* ſhall ſay, *Depart from me all ye workers of iniquity*, Pſal.6.8. and ſhall ſhut the doors againſt them, *Pſal.*101.7. ſhall not ſuch much more expect it from Chriſt's holineſs? Would it be for his honour, to have the dogs to the table, or to lodge the ſwine with his children, or to have *Abraham's* boſom to be a neſt of vipers?

V. *Againſt his Offices.* God hath exalted him to be a *Prince and a Saviour*, Acts 5.31. He ſhould Act againſt both, ſhould he ſave men in their ſins? It is the office of a King,

Parcere ſubjectis, & debellare ſuperbos.

To be a terrour to evil doers, and a praiſe to them that

do well, Rom. 13. 3, 4. *He is a miniſter of God, a revenger to execute wrath on him that doth evil.* Now, ſhould Chriſt favour the ungodly, (ſo continuing) and take thoſe to reign with him, that would not that he ſhould reign over them, *Luke* 19. 27. this were quite againſt his office: He therefore reigns, that he may put his enemies under his feet, 1 *Cor.* 15. 25. Now, ſhould we lay them in his boſom, he ſhould croſs the end of his regal power. It belongs to Chriſt, as a King, to ſubdue the hearts, and ſtay the luſts of his choſen, *Pſal.* 45. 5. and 110. 3. What King would take the rebels, in open hoſtility, into his Court? What were this, but to betray life, Kingdom, Government, and all together? If Chriſt be a King, he muſt have homage, honour, ſubjection, *&c. Mal.* 1. 6. Now, to ſave men while in their natural enmity, were to obſcure his dignity, loſe his authority, bring contempt on his government, and ſell his dear-bought rights for nought.

Again, As Chriſt ſhould not be a Prince, ſo neither a Saviour, if he ſhould do this; for his ſalvation is ſpiritual: He is called Jeſus, becauſe he ſaves his people from their ſins, *Mat.* 1. 21. ſo that ſhould he ſave them in their ſins, he ſhould be neither Lord, nor Jeſus. To ſave men from the puniſhment, and not from the power of ſin, were to do his work by halves, and be an imperfect Saviour. His office, as the *Deliverer*, is, *to turn away ungodlineſs from* Jacob, Rom. 11. 26. *He is ſent to bleſs men, in turning them from their iniquities*, Act. 3. 26. *to make an end of ſin*, *Dan.* 9. 24. So that he ſhould deſtroy his own deſigns, and nullifie his offices, to ſave men abiding in their unconverted ſtate.

Application. Ariſe then: What meaneſt thou, O ſleeper? Awake, O ſecure ſinner, leſt thou be conſumed in thine iniquities. Say, as the Lepers, *If we ſit here we ſhall die*, 2 King. 7. 3, 4. Verily, it is not more

more certain that thou art now out of hell, than that thou ſhalt ſpeedily be in it, except thou repent, and be converted; there is but this one door for thee to eſcape by. Ariſe then, O ſluggard, and ſhake off thine excuſes: How long wilt thou ſlumber, and fold thine hands to ſleep? *Prov.* 6. 10, 11 Wilt thou lie down in the midſt of the Sea, or ſleep on the top of the maſt? *Prov.* 23. 34. There is no remedy; but thou muſt either turn or burn. There is an unchangeable neceſſity of the change of thy condition, except thou art reſolved to abide the worſt of it, and try it out with the Almighty. If thou loveſt thy life, O man, ariſe and come away. Methinks I ſee the Lord Jeſus laying the merciful hands of an holy violence upon thee; methinks he carries it like the Angels to *Lot*, *Gen.* 19. 15, *&c. Then the Angels haſtened* Lot, *ſaying, Ariſe, leſt thou be conſumed. And while he lingred, the men laid hold upon his hand, the Lord being merciful unto him, and they brought him without the city, and ſaid, Eſcape for thy life, ſtay not in all the plain, eſcape to the mountain, leſt thou be conſumed.*

Oh, how wilful will thy deſtruction be, if thou ſhouldſt yet harden thy ſelf in thy ſinful ſtate! But none of you can ſay, but you have had fair warning. Yet methinks I cannot tell how to leave you ſo: It is not enough to me to have delivered my own ſoul. What! Shall I go away without my errand? Will none of you ariſe, and follow me? Have I been all this while ſpeaking to the wind? Have I been charming the deaf Adder, or allaying the tumbling Ocean with arguments? Do I ſpeak to the trees or rocks, or to men? To the tombs and monuments of the dead, or to a living auditory? If you be men, and not ſenſeleſs ſtocks, ſtand ſtill, and conſider whither you are going: If you have the reaſon and underſtanding of men, dare not to run into the flames

flames, and fall into hell with your eyes open; but bethink your ſelves, and ſet to the work of repentance. What, men, and yet run into the pit, when the very beaſts will not be forced in! What, endowed with reaſon, and yet dally with death and hell, and the vengeance of the Almighty! Are men herein diſtinguiſhed from the very brutes, that they have no foreſight of, and care to provide for the things to come; and will you not haſten your eſcape from eternal torments? Oh, ſhew your ſelves men, and let reaſon prevail with you: Is it a reaſonable thing for you to contend againſt the Lord, your Maker? *Iſa.* 45. 9. or to harden your ſelves againſt his word? *Job* 9. 4. as though the ſtrength of *Iſrael* would lye? 1 *Sam.* 15. 29. Is it reaſonable that an underſtanding creature ſhould loſe, yea live quite againſt the very end of his being, and be as a broken pitcher, only fit for the dunghil? Is it tolerable, that the only thing in this world that God hath made capable of knowing his will, and bringing him glory, ſhould yet live in ignorance of his Maker, and be unſerviceable to his uſe; yea, ſhould be engaged againſt him, and ſpit his venom in the face of his Creator? Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, and let the creatures without ſence be judge, if this be reaſon, That man, when God hath nouriſhed and brought him up, ſhould rebel againſt him, *Iſa.* 1. 2. Judge in your own ſelves: Is it a reaſonable undertaking, for bryars and thorns to ſet themſelves in battle againſt the devouring fire? *Iſa.* 27. 4. Or for the potſhard of the earth to ſtrive with his Maker? If you will ſay, this is not reaſon, ſurely the eye of reaſon is quite put out: And if this be reaſon, then there is no reaſon that you ſhould continue as you be, but 'tis all the reaſon in the world, you ſhould forthwith repent and turn.

What ſhall I ſay? I could ſpend my ſelf in this argument.

argument. Oh, that you would but hearken to me! that you would preſently ſet upon a new courſe! Will you not be made clean? When ſhall it once be? What! Will no body be perſuaded? Reader, ſhall I prevail with thee for one? Wilt thou ſit down and conſider the fore-mentioned arguments, and debate it, whether it be not beſt to turn? Come and let us reaſon together: Is it good for thee to be here? Wilt thou ſit ſtill, till the tide come in upon thee? Is it good for thee to try whether God will be ſo good as his word; and to harden thy ſelf in a conceit, that all is well with thee, while thou remaineſt unſanctified?

But I know you will not be perſuaded, but the greateſt part will be as they have been, and do as they have done. I know the drunkard will to his vomit again, and the deceiver will to his deceit again, and the luſtful wanton to his dalliance again. Alas, that I muſt leave you where you were; in your ignorance or looſeneſs, or in your lifeleſs formality, and cuſtomary devotions! However, I will ſit down and bemoan my fruitleſs labours, and ſpend ſome ſighs over my periſhing hearers.

O diſtracted ſinners! What will their end be? What will they do in the day of viſitation? *Whither will they flee for help? Where will they leave their glory?* Iſa. 10. 3. How powerfully hath ſin bewitched them? How effectually hath the God of this world blinded them? How ſtrong is their deluſion? How uncircumciſed their ears? How obdurate their hearts? Satan hath them at his beck. But how long may I call, and can get no anſwer? I may diſpute with them year after year, and they will give me the hearing, and that is all. They muſt and will have their ſins, ſay what I will: Though I tell them there is death in the cup, yet they will take it up: Though I tell them 'tis the broad way, and endeth in deſtruction,

ction, yet they will go on in it: I warn them, yet cannot win them. Sometimes I think, the mercies of God will melt them, and his winning invitations will overcome them; but I find them as they were: Sometimes, that the terror of the Lord will perſuade them; yet neither will this do it. They will approve the Word, like the Sermon, commend the Preacher; but they will yet live as they did. They will not deny me, yet they will not obey me. They will flock to the Word of God, and ſit before me as his people, and hear my words; but they will not do them. They value, and will plead for Miniſters, and I am to them as the lovely ſong of one that hath a pleaſant voice; yet I cannot get them to come under *Chriſt's* yoak. They love me, and will be ready to ſay, they will do any thing for me; but for my life, I cannot perſwade them to leave their ſins, to forego their evil company, their intemperance, their unjuſt gains, &c. I cannot prevail with them to ſet up prayer in their families and cloſets, yet they will promiſe me, like the forward Son, that ſaid, *I go, Sir*; *but went not*, Matt. 21. 30. I cannot perſuade them to learn the principles of Religion, though elſe *they will die without knowledge*, Job 36. 12. I tell them their miſery, but they will not believe but 'tis well enough: If I tell them particularly, I fear for ſuch reaſons their ſtate is bad, they will judge me cenſorious; or if they be at preſent a little awakened, are quickly lull'd aſleep by Satan again, and have loſt the ſenſe of all.

Alas for my poor hearers! muſt they periſh at laſt by hundreds, when Miniſters would ſo fain ſave them? What courſe ſhall I uſe with them, that I have not tried? *What ſhall I do for the daughter of my people?* Jer. 9. 7. *O Lord God, help. Alas! ſhall I leave them thus? If they will not hear me, yet do thou hear me: Oh, that they might yet live in thy ſight! Lord ſave them,*

them, or else they perish. My heart would melt to see their houses on fire about their ears, when they were fast asleep in their beds; and shall not my soul be moved within me, to see them falling into endless perdition! Lord, have compassion, and save them out of the burning: Put forth thy divine power, and the work will be done: But as for me, I cannot prevail.

Chap. IV. *Shewing the Marks of the Unconverted.*

WHile we keep aloof in generals, there is little fruit to be expected: It is the hand-sight that does execution. *David* is not awaken'd by the Prophet's hovering at a distance, in parabolical insinuations: He is forced to close with him, and tell him home, *Thou art the man.* Few will, in words, deny the necessity of the new birth; but they have a self-deluding confidence, that the work is not now to do: And because they know themselves free from that gross hypocrisie, that doth take up Religion meerly for a colour to deceive others, and for the covering of wicked designs, they are confident of their sincerity, and suspect not that more close hypocrisie (where the greatest danger lies) by which a man deceiveth his own soul, *James* 1. 26. But man's deceitful heart is such a matchless cheat, and self-delusion; so reigning, and so fatal a disease, that I know not whether be the greater, the difficulty, or the displicency, or the necessity of the undeceiving work that I am now upon. Alas! For my unconverted hearers, they must be undeceived, or undone. But how shall this be effected? *Hic labor hoc opus est.*

Help, O All-searching Light: and let thy discerning eye discover the rotten foundation of the self-deceiver: and lead me, O Lord God, as thou didst thy Prophet, into the chambers of Imagery, and dig through the wall of sinners hearts,

hearts, and discover the hidden abominations that are lurking out of sight, in the dark. Oh, send thine Angel before me, to open the sundry wards of their hearts, as thou didst before Peter, *and make even the iron gates to fly open of their own accord. And as* Jonathan *no sooner tasted the honey but his eyes were enlightned; so grant, O Lord, that when the poor deceived souls with whom I have to do, shall cast their eyes upon these lines, their minds may be illuminated, and their consciences convinced and awakened, that they may see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and be converted, and thou mayest heal them.*

This must be premised, before we proceed to the discovery, That it is most certain men may have a confident persuasion, that their hearts and states be good, and yet be unsound. Hear the Truth himself, who shews in *Laodicea*'s case, that men may be wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked, and yet not know it; yea, they may be confident they are rich, and increased in grace, *Rev.* 3. 17. *There is a generation that is pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness*, Prov. 30. 12. Who better persuaded of his case than *Paul*, while yet he remained unconverted? *Rom.* 7. 9. So that they are miserably deceived, that take a strong confidence, for a sufficient evidence. They that have no better proof, than barely a strong persuasion, that they are converted, are certainly as yet strangers to Conversion.

But to come more close: As it was said of the adherents of Antichrist, so here; some of the unconverted carry their marks in their foreheads, more openly; and some in their hands, more covertly. The Apostle reckons up some, upon whom he writes the sentence of death, as in these dreadful catalogues, which I beseech you to attend with all diligence, *Ephes.* 5. 5, 6. *For this you know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolator,*

dolater, hath an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no Man deceive you with vain words; for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience, Rev. 21. 8. *But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all lyars, shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death*, 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. *Know ye not, that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God*, see *Gal.* 5. 19, 20, 21. Wo to them that have their names written in these bed-rools: Such may know, as certainly as if God had told it them from heaven, that they are unsanctified, and under an impossibility of being saved in this condition.

There are then these several sorts, that, past all dispute, are unconverted; they carry their marks in their foreheads.

1. *The Unclean.* These are ever reckoned among the Goats, and have their names, whoever be left out, in all the forementioned catalogues, *Ephes.* 5. 5. *Rev.* 21. 8. 1 *Cor.* 5. 9, 10.

2. *The Covetous.* These are ever branded for Idolaters, and the doors of the kingdom are shut against them by name, *Ephes.* 5. 5. *Col.* 3. 5. 1 *Cor.* 6, 9, 10.

3. *Drunkards.* Not only such as drink away their reason, but withal, yea, above all, such as are too strong for strong drink. The Lord fills his mouth with woes against these, and declares them to have no inheritance in the kingdom of God, *Isa.* 5. 11, 12, 22. *Gal.* 5. 21.

4. *Lyars.* The God that cannot Lye hath told them

that there is no place for them in his Kingdom, no entrance into his hill; but their portion is with the father of lies (whose children they are) in the lake of burnings, *Psal.* 15. 1, 2. *Rev.* 21. 8, 27. *Joh.* 8. 44. *Prov.* 6. 17.

5. *Swarers.* The end of these, without deep and speedy repentance, is swift destruction, and most certain and unavoidable condemnation, *Jam.* 5. 12. *Zech.* 5. 1, 2, 3.

6. *Railers and Back-biters*, That love to take up a reproach against their Neighbour, and fling all the dirt they can in his face, or else wound him secretly behind his back, *Psal.* 15. 1, 3. 1 *Cor.* 6. 10. and 5. 11.

7. *Thieves.* Extortioners, Oppressors, that grind the poor, over-reach their brethren, when they have them at an advantage: These must know that *God is the avenger of all such*, 1 Thes. 4. 6. Hear, O ye false, and purloining, and wasteful servants! Hear, O ye deceitful trades-men; hear your sentence: God will certainly hold his door against you, and turn your treasures of unrighteousness into the treasures of wrath, and make your ill-gotten silver and gold to torment you, like burning metal in your bowels, 1 *Cor.* 6. 9, 10. *Jam.* 5. 2, 3.

8. *All that do ordinarily live in the profane neglect of God's worship*, that hear not his word, that call not on his name, that restrain prayer before God, that mind not their own, nor their families souls, but live without God in the world, *Joh.* 8. 47. *and* 15. 4. *Psal.* 14. 4. and 79. 6. *Ephes.* 2. 12. and 4. 18.

9. *Those that are frequenters and lovers of evil company?* God hath declared he will be the destruction of all such, and that they shall never enter into the hill of his rest, *Prov.* 13. 20. *Psal.* 15. 4. *Prov.* 9. 6.

10. *Scoffers at Religion*, that make a scorn of precise Walking, and mock at the messengers and diligent

gent ſervants of the Lord, and at their holy profeſſion, and make themſelves merry with the weakneſs and failings of profeſſors: Hear, ye deſpiſers, hear your dreadful doom, *Prov.* 19. 29. 2 *Chron.* 36. 16. *Prov.* 3. 34.

Sinner, conſider diligently whether thou art not to be found in one of theſe ranks; for if this be thy caſe, thou art in the gall of bitterneſs, and bond of iniquity; for all theſe do carry their marks in their foreheads, and are undoubtedly the ſons of death.

And if ſo, the Lord pity our poor congregations. Oh, how little a number would be left, when theſe ten ſorts are left out: Alas on how many doors, on how many faces muſt we write, Lord have mercy upon us! Sirs, What ſhift do you make to keep up your confidence of your good eſtate, when God from heaven declares againſt you, and pronounces you in a ſtate of damnation? I would reaſon with you, as God with them; *How canſt thou ſay, I am not polluted?* Jer. 2. 23. *See thy way in the valley, know what thou haſt done.* Man, Is not thy conſcience privy to thy tricks of deceit, to thy chamber-pranks, to thy way of lying? yea, are not thy friends, thy family, thy neighbours, witneſſes to thy profane neglects of God's worſhip, to thy covetous practices, to thy envious and malicious carriage? May not they point at thee, as thou goeſt, There goes a gaming prodigal; There goes a drunken *Nabal*, a companion of evil doers; There goes a railer, or a ſcoffer, a looſe liver; Beloved, God hath written it, as with a ſunbeam, in the book out of which you muſt be judged, that theſe are not the ſpots of his children, and that none ſuch (except renewed by converting grace) ſhall ever eſcape the damnation of hell.

Oh, that ſuch of you would now be perſuaded to repent and turn from all your tranſgreſſions; or elſe

iniquity will be your ruin! *Ezek.* 18. 30. Alas for poor hardned ſinners! Muſt I leave you at laſt where you were? Muſt I leave the tipler ſtill at the ale-bench? Muſt I leave the wanton ſtill at his dalliance? Muſt I leave the malicious ſtill in his venom? And the drunkard ſtill at his vomit? However, you muſt know that you have been warned, and that I am clear of your blood. And whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear, I will leave theſe Scriptures with them, either as thunder-bolts to awaken them, or as ſearing irons to hardon them to a reprobate ſenſe, *Pſal.* 68. 21. *God ſhall wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy ſcalp of ſuch an one as goeth on ſtill in his treſpaſſes*, Prov. 29. 1. *He that being often reproved, hardneth his neck, ſhall ſuddenly be deſtroyed, and that without remedy*, Prov. 1. 24, &c. *Becauſe I have called, and ye refuſed? I have ſtretched out my hand, and no man regarded*, &c. *I will mock at your calamity,—— when your deſtruction cometh as a whirlwind.*

And now I imagine, many will begin to bleſs themſelves, and think all is well, becauſe they cannot be ſpotted with the groſſer evils above mentioned. But I muſt farther tell you, that there are another ſort of unſanctified perſons, that carry not their marks in their foreheads, but more ſecretly and covertly in their hands. Theſe do frequently deceive themſelves and others, and paſs for good Chriſtians, when they are all the while unſound at bottom. Many paſs undiſcovered, till death and judgment bring all to light. Thoſe ſelf-deceivers ſeem to come even to heaven's gate with confidence of their admiſſion, and yet are turned off at laſt, *Mat.* 7. 22. Brethren, Beloved, I beſeech you deeply to lay to heart, and firmly to retain this awakening conſideration; *That multitudes miſcarry by the hand of ſome ſecret ſin, that is not only hidden from others, but (for want of obſerving their own hearts) even from themſelves.*

ſelves. A man may be free from open pollutions, and yet die at laſt by the fatal hand of ſome unobſerved iniquity. And there be theſe twelve hidden ſins, by which ſouls go down by numbers into the chambers of death: Theſe you muſt ſearch carefully for, and take them as black marks (where-ever they be found) diſcovering a graceleſs and unconverted eſtate. And as you love your lives, read carefully, with a holy jealouſie of your ſelves, leſt you ſhould be the perſons concerned.

1. *Groſs ignorance.* Ah, how many poor ſouls doth this ſin kill in the dark, *Hoſ.* 4. 6. while they think verily they have good hearts, and are in the ready way to heaven! This is the murderer that diſpatcheth thouſands in a ſilent manner, when (poor hearts) they ſuſpect nothing, and ſee not the hand that miſchiefs them. You ſhall find, whatever excuſes you have for ignorance, that it is a ſoul-undoing evil, *Iſa.* 27. 11. 2 *Theſ.* 1. 8. 2 *Cor.* 4. 3 Ah! Would it not have pitied a man's heart to have ſeen that woful ſpectacle, when the poor Proteſtants were ſhut up a multitude together, in a barn, and a Butcher comes, with his inhumane hands warm in humane blood, and leads them one by one, blindfold, to a block, where he ſlew them (poor innocents!) One after another by the ſcores, in cold blood? But how much more ſhould our hearts bleed, to think of the hundreds in great congregations, that ignorance doth butcher in ſecret, and lead them blindfold to the block? Beware this be none of your caſe; Make no pleas for ignorance: If you ſpare that ſin, know that that will not ſpare you. Will a man keep a murderer in his boſom?

2. *Secret reſerves in cloſing with Chriſt.* To forſake all for Chriſt; to hate father and mother, yea, and a man's own life for him; this is a hard ſaying, *Luke* 14. 26. Some will do much, but they will not

be of the religion that it will undo them; they never come to be entirely devoted to Christ, nor fully to resign to him; they must have the sweet sin, they mean to do themselves no harm; they have secret exceptions for life, liberty, or estate: Many take Christ thus hand over-head, and never consider his self-denying terms, nor cast up the cost; and this errour in the foundation marrs all, and secretly ruins them for ever, *Luke* 14. 28. *Matth.* 13. 21.

3. *Formality in Religion.* Many stick in the bark, and rest in the outside of Religion, and in the external performances of holy duties, *Matth.* 23. 25. And this oft-times doth most effectually deceive Men; and doth more certainly undo them, than open looseness; as it was in the Pharisee's case, *Mat.* 23. 31. They hear, they fast, they pray, they give alms; and therefore will not believe but their case is good, *Luke.* 18. 11. Whereas resting in the work done, and coming short of the heart-work, and the inward power and vitals of Religion, they fall at last into the burning, from the flattering hopes, and confident persuasions of their being in the ready way to heaven, *Matth.* 7. 22, 23. O dreadful case, when a Man's Religion shall serve only to harden him, and effectually to delude and deceive his own soul!

4. *The prevalency of false ends in holy duties*, Matth. 23. 25. This was the bane of the Pharisees. Oh, how many a poor fool is undone by this, and drops into hell, before he discerns his mistake! He performs good duties, and so thinks all is well, and perceives not that he is *actuated* by carnal motives all the while. It is too true, that even with the truly sanctified, many carnal ends will oft-times creep in; but they are the matter of his hatred and humiliation, and never come to be habitually prevalent with him, and to bear the greatest sway, *Rom.* 14 7.

But

But now, when the main thing that doth ordinarily carry a Man out to Religious duties, ſhall be ſome carnal end, as to ſatisfie his conſcience, to get the repute of being religious, to be ſeen of Men, to ſhew his own gifts and parts, to avoid the reproach of a profane and irreligious perſon, or the like; this diſcovers an unſound heart, *Hoſ.* 10. 1. *Zech.* 7. 5, 6. O Chriſtians, if you would avoid ſelf deceit, ſee that you mind, not only your Acts, but withal, yea, above all your ends.

5. *Truſting in their own righteouſneſs*, Luke 18. 9. This is a ſoul-undoing miſchief, *Rom.* 10. 3. When Men do truſt in their own righteouſneſs, they do indeed reject Chriſt's. Beloved, you had need be watchful on every hand; for, not only your ſins, but your duties, may undo you. It may be you never thought of this, but ſo it is, that a Man may as certainly miſcarry by his ſeeming righteouſneſs, and ſuppoſed graces, as by groſs ſins; and that is, when a Man doth truſt to theſe as his righteouſneſs before God, for the ſatisfying his juſtice, appeaſing his wrath, procuring his favour, and obtaining of his own pardon; for this is to put Chriſt out of office, and make a Saviour of our own duties and graces. Beware of this, O profeſſors; you are much in duties, but this one fly will ſpoil all the ointment. When you have done moſt, and beſt, be ſure to go out of your ſelves to Chriſt, reckon your own righteouſneſs but rags, *Pſal.* 143. 2. *Philip.* 3. 8. *Iſa.* 64. 6. *Neh.* 13. 22.

6. *A ſecret enmity againſt the ſtrictneſs of Religion.* Many moral perſons, punctual in their formal devotion, have yet a bitter enmity againſt preciſeneſs, and hate the life and power of Religion, *Philip.* 3. 6. compared with *Acts* 9. 1. They like not this forwardneſs, nor that Men ſhould keep ſuch a ſtir in Religion: They condemn the ſtrictneſs of Religion, as ſingularity

gularity in diſcretion, and intemperate Zeal: And with them, a lively Preacher, or lively chriſtian, is but a heady fellow. Theſe men love not holineſs, as holineſs, (for then they would love the height of holineſs,) and therefore are undoubtedly rotten at heart, whatever good opinion they have of themſelves.

7. *The reſting in a certain pitch of Religion.* When they have ſo much as will ſave them (as they ſuppoſe) they look no farther, and ſo ſhew themſelves ſhort of true grace, which will ever put men upon aſpiring to farther perfection, *Philip.* 3. 13. *Prov.* 4. 18.

8. *The predominant love of the world.* This is the ſure evidence of an unſanctified heart, *Mark* 10. 37. 1 *Joh.* 2. 15.

But how cloſe doth this ſin lurk oft-times under a fair covert of forward profeſſion? *Luke* 8. 14. Yea, ſuch a power of deceit is there in this ſin, that many times, when every body elſe can ſee the man's wordlineſs, and *covetouſneſs*, he cannot ſee it himſelf; but hath ſo many colours, and excuſes, and pretences for his eagerneſs on the world, that he doth blind his own eyes, and periſh in his ſelf-deceit. How many profeſſors be here, with whom the world hath more of their hearts and affections than Chriſt? Who mind earthly things, and thereby are evidently after the fleſh, and like to end in deſtruction? *Rom.* 8. 5. *Philip.* 3. 19. Yet ask theſe men; and they will tell you confidently, they prize Chriſt above all, God forbid elſe! And ſee not their own earthly-mindedneſs, for want of a narrow obſervation of the workings of their own hearts. Did they but carefully ſearch, they would quickly find, that their greateſt content is in the world, *Luke* 12. 19. and their greateſt care, and main endeavour to get and ſecure the world; which are the certain diſcovery of an unconverted ſinner. May the profeſſing

feſſing part of the world take earneſt heed, that they periſh not by the hand of this ſin unobſerved. Men may be, and often are kept off from Chriſt, as effectually, by the inordinate love of lawful comforts, as by the moſt unlawful courſes, *Matth.* 22. 5. *Luke* 14. 18, 19, 20, 24.

9. *Reigning malice and envy againſt thoſe that diſreſpect them, or are injurious to them,* 1 Joh. 2. 9, 11. Oh, How do many that ſeem to be religious remember injuries, and carry grudges, and will return men as good as they bring; rendring evil for evil, loving to take revenge, wiſhing evil to them that wrong them, directly againſt the rule of the Goſpel, the pattern of Chriſt, and the nature of God, *Rom.* 12. 14, 17. 1 *Pet.* 2. 21, 23. *Neh.* 9. 17. Doubtleſs, where this evil is kept boiling in the heart, and is not hated, reſiſted, mortified, but doth habitually prevail, that perſon is the very gall of bitterneſs, and in a ſtate of death, *Matth.* 18. 34, 35. 1 *Joh.* 3. 14, 15.

Reader, Doth nothing of this touch thee? Art thou in none of the fore-mentioned ranks? Oh, ſearch, and ſearch again; take thy heart ſolemnly to task. Woe unto thee, if after all thy profeſſion, thou ſhouldſt be found under the power of ignorance, loſt in formality, drowned in earthly mindedneſs, envenomed with malice, exalted in an opinion of thine own righteouſneſs, levened with hypocriſie, and carnal ends in God's ſervice, imbittered againſt ſtrictneſs: This would be a ſad diſcovery, that all thy Religion were in vain. But I muſt proceed.

10. *Unmortified pride:* When men love the praiſe of men, more than the praiſe of God; and ſet their hearts upon men's eſteem, applauſe, and approbation, it is moſt certain they are yet in their ſins, and ſtrangers to true converſion, *Joh.* 12. 43. *Gal.* 1. 10. When men ſee not, nor complain nor groan under the pride of their own hearts, it is a ſign they

are ſtark dead in ſin. Oh, how ſecretly doth this ſin live and reign in many hearts, and they know it not, but are very ſtrangers to themſelves! *Joh.* 9. 40.

11. *The prevailing love of pleaſure*, 2 Tim. 3. 4. This is a black mark. When Men give the fleſh the liberty that it craves, and pamper and pleaſe it, and do not deny and reſtrain it; when their great delight is in gratifying their bellies, and pleaſing their ſenſes? Whatever appearance they may have of Religion, all is unſound, *Rom.* 16. 18. *Tit.* 3. 3. A fleſh-pleaſing life cannot be pleaſing to God; *They that are Chriſt's have crucified the fleſh*, and are careful to croſs it, and keep it under, as their enemy, *Gal.* 5. 24. 1 *Cor.* 9. 25, 26, 27.

12. *Carnal ſecurity, or a preſumtuous and ungrounded confidence, that their condition is already good*, Rev. 3. 17. Many cry, peace and ſafety, when ſudden deſtruction is coming upon them, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 3. This was that which kept the fooliſh Virgins ſleeping, when they ſhould have been working; upon their beds, when they ſhould have been at the Markets, *Matth.* 25. 5. 10. *Prov.* 10. 5. They perceived not their want of oil, till the Bridegroom was come; and while they went to by, the door was ſhut. And Oh that theſe fooliſh Virgins had no ſucceſſors! Where is the place, yea, Where is the houſe almoſt, where theſe do not dwell? Men are willing to cheriſh in themſelves, upon never ſo ſlight grounds, a hope that their condition is good, and ſo look not out after a change, and by this means periſh in their ſins. Are you at peace? Shew me upon what grounds your peace is maintained. Is it a Scripture-peace? Can you ſhew the diſtinguiſhing marks of a ſound believer? Can you evidence that you have ſomething more than any hypocrite in the world ever had? If not fear this peace more than any trouble; and

know,

know, that a carnal peace doth commonly prove the moſt mortal enemy of the poor ſoul; and while it ſmiles and kiſſes, and ſpeaks it fair, doth fatally ſmite it, as it were under the fifth rib.

By this time methinks I hear my Reader crying out with the Diſciples, Who then ſhall be ſaved? Set out from among our congregations all thoſe ten ranks of the profane on the one hand, and then beſides, take out all theſe twelve ſorts of cloſe and ſelf-deceiving hypocrites on the other hand, and tell me then, whether it be not a remnant that ſhall be ſaved. How few will be the ſheep that ſhall be left, when all theſe ſhall be ſeparated, and ſet among the goats; For my part, of all my numerous hearers, I have no hope to ſee any of them in heaven, that are to be found among theſe two and twenty ſorts that are hear mentioned, except by ſound *converſion* they be *brought* into *another condition.*

Application. And now, Conſcience, do thine office Speak out, and ſpeak home to him that heareth or readeth theſe lines. If thou find any of theſe marks upon him, thou muſt pronounce him utterly unclean, *Levit.* 13. 44. Take not up a lye into thy mouth: Speak not peace to him, to whom God ſpeaks no peace. Let not luſt bribe thee, or ſelf-love, or carnal prejudice blind thee. I *ſubpœna* thee from the Court of Heaven, to come and give in evidence: I require thee, in the name of God, to go with me to the ſearch of the ſuſpected houſe. As thou wilt anſwer it at thy peril, give in a true report of the ſtate and caſe of him that readeth this book. Conſcience, wilt thou altogether hold thy peace at ſuch a time as this? I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us the truth, *Matth.* 26. 63. Is the Man converted, or is he not? Doth he allow himſelf in any way of ſin, or doth he not? Doth he truly love, and pleaſe, and prize, and delight in God,

God above all other things, or not? Come, put it to an iſſue.

How long ſhall this ſoul live at uncertainties? O Conſcience, bring in thy *verdict*. Is this man a new man, or is he not? How doſt thou find it? Hath there paſſed a through and mighty change upon him, or not? When was the time, where was the place, or what was the means by which this thorough change of the new birth was wrought in his ſoul? Speak, Conſcience: Or if thou canſt not tell time and place, canſt thou ſhew Scripture-evidence, that the work is done; Hath the man been ever taken off from his falſe bottom, from the falſe hopes, and falſe peace, wherein once he truſted? Hath he been deeply convinced of ſin, and of his loſt and undone condition, and brought out of himſelf, and off from his ſins, to give up himſelf entirely to Jeſus Chriſt? Or doſt thou not find him to this day under the power of ignorance, or in the mire of profaneneſs? Haſt thou not taken upon him the gaits of unrighteouſneſs? Doſt not thou find him a ſtranger to prayer, a neglecter of the word, a lover of this preſent world? Doſt not thou often catch him in a lye? Doſt not thou find his heart fermented with malice, or burning with luſt, or going after his covetouſneſs? Speak plainly to all the fore-mentioned particulars: Canſt thou acquit this man, this woman, from being any of the two and twenty ſorts here deſcribed? If he be found with any of them, ſet him aſide, his portion is not with the Saints: He muſt be converted, and made a new creature, or elſe he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Beloved, be not your own betrayer, do not deceive your own hearts, nor ſet your hands to your own ruin, by a wilful blinding of your ſelves. Set up a Tribunal in your own breaſts: Bring the word and conſcience together: *To the Law, and to the teſti-*

mony,

many, Iſa. 8. 20. Hear what the word concludes of your eſtates. Oh, follow the ſearch, till you have found how the caſe ſtands: Miſtake here, and periſh. And ſuch is the treachery of the heart, the ſubtilty of the tempter, and the deceitfulneſs of ſin, *Jer.* 17. 9. 2 *Cor.* 11. 3. *Heb.* 3. 13. all conſpire to flatter and deceive the poor ſoul; and withal, ſo common and eaſie it is to be miſtaken, that 'tis a thouſand to one but you will be deceived, unleſs you be very careful, and through, and impartial in the enquiry into your ſpiritual conditions. Oh, therefore ply your work, go to the bottom, ſearch as with candels, weigh you in the ballance, come to the ſtandard of the ſanctuary, bring your coin to the touch-ſtone. You have the archeſt cheats in the world to deal with, a world of counterfeit coin is going, happy is he that takes no counters for gold. Satan is maſter of deceits; he can draw to the life, he is perfect in the trade, there is nothing but he can imitate: You cannot wiſh for any grace, but he can fit you to a hair with a counterfeit. Trade warily, look on every piece you take, be jealous, truſt not ſo much as your own hearts. Run to God to ſearch you, and try you; to examine you, and prove your reins, *Pſal.* 26. 2. and 139. 23, 24. If other helps ſuffice not to bring all to an iſſue, but you are ſtill at a loſs, open your caſes faithfully to ſome godly and faithful Miniſter, *Mal.* 2. 7. Reſt not, till you have put the buſineſs of your eternal welfare out of queſtion, 1 *Pet.* 2. 10. *O ſearcher of hearts, put thou this ſoul upon, and help him in the ſearch.*

Chap. V. *Shewing the Miſeries of the Unconverted.*

SO unſpeakably dreadful is the caſe of every unconverted ſoul, that I have ſometime thought, if

If we could but convince Men that they are yet unregenerate, the work were upon the matter done. But I ſadly experience, that ſuch a ſpirit of ſloth and ſlumber (*Rom.* 11. 8. *Matth.* 13. 15.) poſſeſſeth the unſanctified, that though they be convinced that they are yet unconverted, yet they oft-times careleſly ſit ſtill; and what through the avocation of ſenſual pleaſures, or hurry of worldly buſineſs, or noiſe and clamour of earthly cares, and luſts, and affections, *Luke* 8. 14. the voice of conſcience is drowned, and Men go no farther than ſome cold wiſhes, and general purpoſes of repenting and amending, *Acts* 24. 25.

It is therefore of high neceſſity, that I do not only convince Men that they are unconverted, but that I alſo endeavour to bring them to a ſenſe of the fearful miſery of this eſtate.

But here I find my ſelf a-ground at firſt putting forth. What tongue can tell the heirs of hell ſufficiently of their miſery, unleſs 'twere *Dives*'s in that flame? *Luke* 16. 24. Where is the ready writer, whoſe pen can decipher their miſery, that are without God in the world? *Epheſ.* 2. 12. This cannot fully be done, unleſs we knew the infinite ocean of that bliſs and perfection which is in that God, which a ſtate of ſin doth exclude Men from. *Who knoweth* (ſaith *Moſes*) *the power of thine anger?* Pſal. 90. 11. And how ſhall I tell Men that which I do not know? Yet ſo much we know, as one would think, would ſhake the heart of that Man that had the leaſt degree of ſpiritual life and ſenſe.

But this is yet the more poſing difficulty, that I am I to ſpeak to them that are without ſenſe. Alas, this is not the leaſt part of Man's miſery upon him, that he is dead, ſtark dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, *Epheſ.* 2. 1.

Could I bring Paradiſe into view, or repreſent the

the kingdom of heaven to as much advantage, as the tempter did the kingdoms of the world, and all the glory thereof, to our Saviour; or could I uncover the face of the deep, and devouring gulph of *Tophet* in all its terrours, and open the gates of the infernal furnace; alas, he hath no eyes to ſee it, *Mat.* 13. 14, 15. Could I paint out the beauties of holineſs, or glory of the Goſpel, to the life; or could I bring above-board the more than diabolical deformity and uglineſs of ſin, he can no more judge of the lovelineſs and beauty of the one, nor the filthineſs and hatefulneſs of the other, than the blind Man of colours. He is alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in him, becauſe of the blindneſs of his heart, *Epheſ.* 4. 18. He neither doth, nor can know the things of God, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned, 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. His eyes cannot be ſavingly opened, but by converting grace, *Acts* 26. 18. He is a child of darkneſs, and walks in darkneſs, 1 *Joh.* 1. 6. Yea, the light in him is darkneſs, *Matth.* 6. 2, 3.

Shall I ring his knell, or read his ſentence, or ſound in his ear the terrible trump of God's judgments, that one would think ſhould make both his ears to tingle, and ſtrike him into *Belſhazzar's* fit; even to appale his countenance, and looſe his joints, and make his knees ſmite one againſt another? Yet, alas! He peceives me not, he hath no ears to hear. Or ſhall I call up all the daughters of muſick, and ſing the ſong of *Moſes*, and of the lamb? Yet he will not be ſtirred. Shall I allure him with the joyful ſound, and the lovely ſong, and glad tidings of the Goſpel? With the moſt ſweet and inviting calls, comforts, cordials of the divine promiſes, ſo exceeding great and precious? It will not affect him ſavingly, unleſs I could find him ears, *Matth.* 13. 15. as well as tell him the news.

Shall

Shall I set before him the feast of fat things, the wine of wisdom, the bread of God, the tree of life, the hidden *Manna:* He hath no appetite for them, no mind to them, 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. *Matth.* 22. 5. Should I press the choicest grapes, the heavenly clusters of Gospel-privileges, and drink to him in the richest wine of God's own cellar, yea, of his own side; or set before him the delicious honey-comb of God's testimonies, *Psal.* 19. 10. alas, he hath no taste to discern them. Shall I invite the dead to arise, and eat the banquet of their funerals? No more can the dead in sin savour the holy food wherewith the Lord of life hath spread his table.

What then shall I do? Shall I burn the brimstone of hell at his nostrils? Or shall I open the box of Spikenard, very precious, that filleth the whole house of this universe with its perfume, *Mark* 14. 3. *Joh.* 12. 8. and hope that the savour of Christ's ointments, and the smell of his garments, will attract him? *Psal.* 45. 8. Alas! Dead sinners are like the dumb idols, they have mouths, but they speak not, eyes have they, but they see not; they have ears, but they hear not; noses have they, but they smell not; they have hands, but they handle not; feet have they, but they walk not; neither speak they through their throat, *Psal.* 115. 5, 6, 7. They are destitute of all spiritual sense and motion.

But let me try the sense that doth last leave us, and draw the sword of the word? Yet lay at him while I will, yea, though I chuse mine arrows out of God's quiver, and direct them to the heart, nevertheless he feeleth it not; For how should he, being past feeling? *Ephes.* 4. 19. So that though the wrath of God abideth on him, and the mountainous weight of so many thousand sins, yet he goes up and down as light as if nothing ailed him, *Rom.* 7. 9. In a word, he carries a dead soul in a living body, and his flesh

is

is but the walking coffin of a corrupted mind, that is twice dead, *Jude* 12. rotting in the ſlime and putrefaction of noiſome luſts, *Matth.* 23. 27, 28.

Which way then ſhall I come at the miſerable objects that I have to deal with? Who ſhall make the heart of ſtone to relent? *Zech.* 11. 12. or the lifeleſs carcaſe to feel and move? That God that is able of ſtones to raiſe up children unto *Abraham*, *Matth.* 3. 9. that raiſeth the dead, 2 *Cor.* 1. 9. and melteth the mountains, *Neh.* 1. 5. and ſtrikes water out of the flints, *Deut.* 8. 15. that loves to work like himſelf, beyond the hopes and belief of man; that peopleth his church with dry bones, and planteth his orchard with dry ſticks; he is able to do this. Therefore I bow my knee to the moſt high God, *Epheſ.* 3. 14. and as our Saviour prayed at the ſepulchre of *Lazarus*, *Joh.* 11. 38, 41. and the *Shunamite* ran to the man of God, for her dead child, 2 *Kings* 4. 25. ſo doth your mourning miniſter kneel about your graves, and carry you in the arms of prayer to that God in whom your help is found.

O thou all-powerful Jehova, *that worke ſt, and none can let thee; that haſt the keys of hell, and of death, pity thou the dead ſouls that lie here intombed, and roll away the grave-ſtone, and ſay, as to* Lazarus, *when already ſtinking, Come forth. Lighten thou this darkneſs, O inacceſſable Light, and let the day-ſpring from an high viſit the darkſome region of the dead, to whom I ſpeak; for thou canſt open the eyes that death it ſelf hath cloſed; thou that formedſt the ear, canſt reſtore the hearing. Say thou to theſe ears,* Ephphathah, *and they ſhall be opened. Give thou eyes to ſee thine excellencies, a taſte that may reliſh thy ſweetneſs, a ſcent that may ſavour thine ointments, a feeling that may ſenſe the priviledge of thy favour, the burden of thy wrath, the intolerable weight of unpardoned ſin; and give thy ſervants command to propheſie to the dry bones, and let the effects of this propheſie be, as of thy Prophet,*

phet, when he propheſied the valley of dry bones into a living army, exceeding great, Ezek. 37. 1, &c. *The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the ſpirit of the Lord, and ſet me down in the midſt of the valley, which was full of bones. He ſaid unto me, Propheſie upon theſe bones, and ſay unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus ſaith the Lord God unto theſe bones, Behold, I will cauſe breath to enter into you, and ye ſhall live. And I will lay ſinews upon you, and will bring up fleſh upon you, and cover you with Skin, and put breath in you, and ye ſhall live, and ye ſhall know that I am the Lord. So I propheſied as I was commanded; and as I propheſied, there was a noiſe, and behold a ſhaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, Lo, the ſinews and the fleſh came upon them, and covered them above, but there was no breath in them. Then ſaid he unto me, propheſie unto the wind, propheſie, ſon of man, and ſay unto the wind, Thus ſaith the Lord God, Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon theſe ſlain, that they may live. So I propheſied, as he commanded me; and the breath came into them, and they lived and ſtood upon their feet, an exceeding great army.*

But I muſt proceed, as I am able, to unfold that miſery, which, I confeſs, no tongue can unfold, no heart can ſufficiently comprehend. Know therefore, that while thou art unconverted,

1. *The infinite God is engaged againſt thee.*

It is no ſmall part of thy miſery, that thou *art without God,* Epheſ. 2. 12. How doth *Micah* run crying after the *Danites*, *you have taken away my Gods, and what have I more?* Judg. 18 23, 24. Oh, what a mourning then muſt thou lift up, that are without God, that canſt lay no claim to him, without daring uſurpation! Thou mayeſt ſay of God, as *Sheba* of *David*; *We have no part in* David, *neither have we inheritance in the ſon of* Jeſſe, 2 Sam. 20. 1. How pitiful and piercing a moan is that of *Saul*, in his extremity?

mity? *The Philiſtines are upon me, and God is departed from me*, 1 Sam. 28. 15. Sinners, But what will you do in the day of your viſitation? Whither will you flee for help? Where will you leave your glory? *Iſa.* 10. 3. What will you do when the *Philiſtines* are upon you; when the world ſhall take its eternal leave of you; when you muſt bid your friends, houſes, lands, farewel for evermore? What will you do then, I ſay, that have never a God to go to? Will you call on him? Will you cry to him for help? Alas! He will not own you, *Prov.* 1. 28, 29. he will not take any knowledge of you, but ſend you packing with an *I never knew you*, *Matth.* 7. 23. They that know what it is to have a God to go to, a God to live upon, they know a little, what a fearful miſery it is to be without God. This made that holy Man cry out, *Let me have a God, or nothing. Let me know him, and his will, and what will pleaſe him, and* how *I may* come to enjoy *him*; or would *I had never had an underſtanding* to know *any thing*, &c.

But thou art not only without God, but God *is againſt thee*, *Ezek.* 5. 8, 9. *Nah.* 2. 13. Oh, if God would but ſtand a Neuter, though he did not own nor help the poor ſinner, his caſe were not ſo deeply miſerable. Though God ſhould give up the poor creature to the will of all his enemies, to do their worſt with him; though he ſhould deliver him over to the torments, *Matth.* 18. 34. that divels ſhould tear and torture him to their utmoſt power and Skill, yet this were not half ſo fearful. But God will ſet himſelf againſt the Sinner; and believe it, *'Tis a feaful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*, Heb. 10 31. There is no friend like him, no enemy like him. As much as heaven is above the earth, omnipotency above impotency, infinity above nullity; ſo much more horrible is it to fall into the hands of the living God, than into the

paws

paws of bears or lions, yea, furies or devils. God himself will be thy tormentor, thy destruction shall come from the presence of the Lord, *2 Thes.* 1. 9. 'Tophet is deep and large, and the wrath of the Lord, 'like a river of brimstone, doth kindle it, *Isa.* 30. '33. If God be against thee, who shall be for thee? 'If one man sin against another, the judge shall 'judge him: but if a man sin against the Lord, who 'shall intreat for him? 1 *Sam* 2. 25. Thou, even 'thou, art to be feared: And who shall stand in thy 'sight, when once thou art angry? *Psal.* 76. 7. Who 'is that God, that shall deliver you out of his hands? 'Dan. 3. 15. Can *Mammon*? Riches profit not in 'the day of wrath, *Prov.* 11. 4. Can Kings, or 'Warriers? No, they shall cry to the mountains and 'rocks to fall on us, and hide us from the face of 'him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath 'of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is 'come, and who shall be able to stand? *Rev.* 6. 15, 16, 17.

Sinner, Methinks this should go like a dagger to thine heart, to know that God is thine enemy. Oh, whither wilt thou go? Where wilt thou *shelter* thee? There is no hope for thee, unless thou lay down thy weapons, and sue out thy pardon, and get Christ to stand thy friend, and make thy peace. If it were not for this, thou mightest go into some howling wilderness, and there pine in sorrow, and run mad for anguish of heart, and horrible despair. But in Christ there is a possibility of mercy for thee, yea, a proffer of mercy to thee; that thou mayest have God to be more for thee; than he is now against thee. But if thou wilt not forsake thy sins, nor turn throughly, and to purpose, unto God, by a sound conversion, the wrath of God abideth on thee, and he proclaims himself to be against thee, as in the Prophet, *Ezek.* 5. 8. *Therefore thus*

saith

ſaith the Lord God, Behold, I, even I, am againſt thee.

1. *His face is againſt thee*, Pſal. 34. 16. *The face of the Lord is againſt them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them.* Woe unto them whom God *ſhall* ſet his face againſt. When he did but look upon the hoſt of the *Egyptians*, how terrible was the conſequence? *Ezek.* 14. 8. 'I will ſet my face againſt that 'man, and will make him a ſign, and proverb, and 'will cut him off from the midſt of my people, 'and you ſhall know that I am the Lord. 2. His 'heart is againſt thee: He hateth all the workers of 'iniquity. Man, Doth not thine heart tremble to 'think of thy being an object of God's hatred? *Jer.* '15. 1. Though *Moſes* and *Samuel* ſtood before me, 'yet my mind could not be towards this people: 'Caſt them out of my ſight, *Zech.* 7. 8. My ſoul 'loathed them, and their ſouls alſo abhorred me. '3 His hand is againſt thee, 1 *Sam.* 12. 14, 15. All 'his attributes are againſt thee.

'Firſt, His Juſtice is like a flaming ſword un'ſheathed againſt thee. If I whet my glittering 'ſword, and my hand take hold on judgment, I 'will render vengance to mine adverſaries, and 'will reward them that hate me. I will make mine 'arrows drunk with blood, *&c. Deut.* 32. 40, 41. So exact is Juſtice, that it will by no means clear the guilty, *Exod.* 34. 7. God will not diſcharge thee, he will not hold thee guiltleſs, *Exod.* 20. 7. but will require the whole debt in perſon of thee unleſs thou canſt make a Scripture claim to Chriſt, and his ſatisfaction. When the enlightned ſinner looks on juſtice, and ſees the ballance in which he muſt be weighed, and the ſword by which he muſt be executed, he feels an earthquake in his breaſt: But Satan keeps this out of ſight, and perſuades the ſoul, while he can, that the Lord is all made up of mercy, and ſo lulls it aſleep in ſin. Divine juſtice

ſtice is very ſtrict; it muſt have ſatisfaction to the utmoſt farthing; it denounceth *indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguiſh, to every ſoul that doth evil*, Rom. 2. 8, 9. It curſeth every one that continueth not in every thing that is written in the Law, to do it, *Gal.* 3. 10. The juſtice of God to the unpardoned ſinner, that hath a ſenſe of his miſery, is more terrible than the ſight of the Bayliff or Creditor to the bankrupt Debtor, or than the ſight of the Judge and Bench to the Robber, or of the Irons and Gibbet to the guilty Murderer. When Juſtice ſits upon life and death, Oh, what dreadful work doth it make with the wretched ſinner! *Bind him hand and foot, caſt him into utter darkneſs; there ſhall be weeping, and gnaſhing of teeth*, Matth. 22. 13. *Depart from me, ye curſed into everlaſting fire.* Matth. 25. 41. This is the terrible ſentence that Juſtice pronounceth. Why ſinner, by this ſevere Juſtice muſt thou be tried; and as God liveth, this killing ſentence ſhalt thou hear, unleſs thou repent, and be converted.

Secondly, *The holineſs of God is full of antipathy againſt thee*, Pſal. 5. 4, 5. He is not only angry with thee, (ſo he may be with his own children,) but he hath a fixed, rooted, habitual diſpleaſure againſt thee, he loaths thee, *Zech.* 11. 8. and what is done by thee, though for ſubſtance commanded by him, *Iſa.* 1. 14. *Mal.* 1. 10. As if a Man ſhould give his ſervant never ſo good meat to dreſs; yet if he ſhould mingle filth or poyſon with it, he would not touch it. God's nature is infinitely contrary to ſin, and ſo he cannot but hate a ſinner out of Chriſt.

Oh, what a miſery is this, to be out of the favour, yea, under the hatred of God! *Eccleſ.* 5. 4. *Hoſ.* 9. 15. That God can as eaſily lay aſide his nature, and ceaſe to be God, as not be contrary to thee, *and deteſt thee*, except thou be changed and renewed by grace

O ſin-

O sinner, How darest thou to think of the bright and radiant Sun of purity, upon the beauties, the glory of holiness that is in God! *The stars are not pure in his sight*, Job. 25. 5. *He humbleth himself to behold things that are done in heaven*, Psal. 11. 3, 6. O those light and sparkling eyes of his! What do they espy in thee? And thou hast no interest in Christ neither, that he should plead for thee. Methinks I should hear the crying out, astonished, with the *Bethshemites*, *Who shall stand before this holy Lord God?* 1 Sam. 6. 20.

Thirdly, *The power of God is mounted like a mighty Cannon against thee.* The glory of God's power is to be displayed, in the wonderful confusion and destruction of them that obey not the Gospel, 2*Thes.* 1. 8, 9. He will make his power known in them, *Rom.* 9. 22. How mightily he can torment them! For this end he raiseth them up, *that he might make his power known*, Rom. 9. 17. O Man, art thou able to make thy party good with thy Maker? No more than a silly reed against the Cedars of God, or a little Cock-boat against the tumbling Ocean, or the children's bubbles against the blustring winds.

Sinner, the power of God's anger is against thee, *Psal.* 90. 11. and power and anger together make fearful work. 'Twere better thou hadst all the world in arms against thee, than to have the power of God against thee. There is no escaping his hands, no breaking his prison. 'The thunder of his 'power who can understand! *Job* 26. 14. Unhappy 'Man, that shall understand it by feeling it! If he 'will contend with him, he cannot answer him one 'of a thousand. He is wise in heart, and mighty 'in strength: Who hath hardned himself against 'him, and prospered? Which removeth the mountains, and they know it not; which overturneth 'them in his anger: Which shaketh the earth out of 'her place, and the pillars thereof tremble: Which

'com-

'commanded the Sun, and it riſeth not; and ſeal-
'eth up the Stars. Behold, he taketh away: Who
'can hinder him; who will ſay unto him, What
'doſt thou? If God will not withdraw his anger,
'the proud helpers do ſtoop under him, *Job* 9. 3, 4,
'5, 6, *&c.* And art thou a fit match for ſuch an An-
'tagoniſt? Oh, conſider this, you that forget God,
'leſt he tear you in pieces, and there be none to de-
'liver you, *Pſal.* 50. 22. Submit to mercy. Let not
'duſt and ſtubble ſtand it out againſt the Almighty.
Set not briars and thorns againſt him in battle, leſt
he go through them, and conſume them together;
but lay hold on *his ſtrength, that you may make peace
with him*, Iſa. 27. 4, 5. *Woe to him that ſtriveth with
his Maker*, Iſa. 45. 9.

Fourthly, *The wiſdom of God is ſet to ruin thee.* He hath ordained his arrows, and prepared the inſtruments of death, and made all things ready, *Pſal.* 7. 12, 13. His counſels are againſt thee, to contrive thy deſtruction, *Jer.* 18. 11. He laughs in himſelf, to ſee how thou wilt be taken and enſnared in the evil day, *Pſal.* 37. 13. *The* Lord *ſhall laugh at him*, for *he ſeeth that the day is* coming. He ſees how thou wilt come down mightily in a moment; how thou wilt wring thine hands, and tear thine hair, and eat thy fleſh, and gnaſh thy teeth for anguiſh and aſtoniſhment of heart, when thou ſeeſt thou art fallen remedileſly into the pit of deſtruction.

Fifthly, *The truth of God is ſworn againſt thee*, Pſal. 95. 11. If he be true and faithful, thou muſt periſh if thou goeſt on, *Luke* 13. 3. Unleſs he be falſe of his word, thou muſt die, except thou repent, *Ezek.* 33. 11. If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himſelf, 2 *Tim.* 2. 13. That is, He is faithful to his threatnings, as well as promiſes; and will ſhew his faithfulneſs in our confuſion, if we believe not. God hath told thee, as plain as

it

it can be ſpoken, *That if he waſh thee not, thou haſt no part in him*, Joh. 13. 8. *That if thou liveſt after the fleſh, thou ſhalt die*, Rom. 8. 13. *That except thou be converted, thou ſhalt in no wiſe enter into the Kingdom of heaven*, Matth. 18. 3. and he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himſelf. Beloved, as the immutable faithfulneſs of God in his promiſe and oath, afford believers ſtrong conſolation, *Heb.* 6. 18. ſo they are, to *Unbelievers*, for ſtrong conſternation and confuſion. O ſinner, tell me: What ſhift doſt thou make to think of all the threatnings of God's word, that ſtand upon record againſt thee? Doſt thou believe their truth, or not? If not, thou art a wretched Infidel, and not a Chriſtian, and therefore give over the name and hopes of a Chriſtian. But if thou doſt believe them. O heart of ſteel that thou haſt, that canſt walk up and down in quiet, when the truth and faithfulneſs of God is engaged to deſtroy thee! That if God Almighty can do it, thou ſhalt ſurely periſh and be damned. Why, man; the whole book of God doth teſtifie againſt thee, while thou remaineſt unſanctified: It condemns thee in every leaf, and is to thee, like *Ezekiel*'s roll, written within and without with lamentation, and mourning, and woe, *Ezek.* 2. 10. And all this ſhall ſurely come upon thee, and overtake thee, *Deut.* 28. 15. except thou repent. *Heaven and earth ſhall paſs away, but one jot or tittle of this word ſhall never paſs away*, Mat. 5. 18.

Now put all this together, and tell me if the caſe of the unconverted be not deplorably miſerable. As we read of ſome perſons, that had bound themſelves in an oath, and in a curſe, to kill *Paul*; ſo thou muſt know, O ſinner, to thy terrour, that all the attributes of the infinite God are bound in an oath to deſtroy thee, *Heb.* 3. 28. O man? What wilt thou do? Whither wilt thou fly? If Gods

Omniſciency can find thee, thou ſhalt not eſcape: If the true and faithful God will ſave his oath, periſh thou muſt, except thou believe and repent: If the Almighty hath power to torment thee, thou ſhalt be perfectly miſerable in ſoul and body to all eternity, unleſs it be prevented by thy ſpeedy converſion.

II. *The* whole creation of God *is againſt thee. The* whole creation (ſaith *Paul*) *groaneth and travaileth in pain*, Rom. 8. 22. But what is it that the creation groaneth under? Why, the fearful abuſe that it is ſubject to, in ſerving the luſts of unſanctified men. And what is it that the creation groaneth for? Why, for freedom and liberty from this abuſe; for *the creature is very unwillingly ſubject to this bondage*, Rom. 8. 19, 20, 21. If the unreaſonable and inanimate creatures had ſpeech and reaſon, they would cry out under it, as bondage unſufferable, to be abuſed by the ungodly, contrary to their natures, and the ends that the great Creator made them for. It is a paſſage of an eminent Divine, 'The liquor that the 'drunkard drinketh, if it had reaſon as well as a 'man to know how ſhamefully it is abuſed and 'ſpoiled, it would groan in the barrels againſt him, 'it would groan in the cup againſt him, groan in 'his throat, in his belly, againſt him; it would fly 'in his face, if it could ſpeak. And if God ſhould 'open the mouths of the creatures, as he did the 'mouth of *Balaam's* Aſs, the proud man's garments 'on his back would groan againſt him. There is ne'ver a creature, but if it had reaſon to know how it 'is abuſed, till a man be converted, it would groan 'againſt him: The land would groan to bear him, 'the air would groan to give him breathing, their 'houſes would groan to lodge them, their beds would 'groan to eaſe them, their food to nouriſh them, 'their cloaths to cover them, and the creature would

groan,

'groan to give them any help and comfort, ſo long 'as they live in ſin againſt God. Thus far he. Me-thinks this ſhould be a terrour to an unconverted ſoul, to think that he is a burden to the creation, *Luke* 13. 7. *Cut it* down, *why cumbreth it the* ground? If the poor inanimate creatures could but ſpeak, they would ſay to the ungodly, as *Moſes* to *Iſrael*, 'Muſt we fetch you water out of the rock, ye re-'bels? *Num.* 2. 10. Thy food would ſay, Lord, muſt 'I nouriſh ſuch a wretch as this, and yield forth my 'ſtrength for him to diſhonour thee withal? No, I 'will choak him rather, if thou wilt give me com-'miſſion. The *very air* would ſay, Lord, muſt I 'give this man breath, to ſet his tongue againſt hea-'ven, and ſcorn thy people, and vent his pride, and 'wrath, and filthy communication, and belch out 'oaths and blaſphemy againſt thee? No, if thou but 'ſay the word, he ſhall be breathleſs for me. His 'poor beaſt would ſay, Lord, muſt I carry him up-'on his wicked deſigns? No, I will break his bones, 'I will end his days rather, if I may have but leave 'from thee. A wicked man, the earth groans un-der him, and hell groans for him, till death ſatisfies both, and unburdens the earth, and ſtops the mouth of hell with him. While the Lord of hoſts is a-gainſt thee, be ſure the hoſts of the Lord are againſt thee, and all the creatures as it were up in arms, till upon a man's converſion, the controverſie being ta-ken up between God and him, he makes a covenant of peace with the creatures for him, *Job* 5. 22, 23, 24. *Hoſ.* 2. 18, 19, 20.

III. *The* roaring Lion *hath his full* power upon *thee*, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. Thou art faſt in the paw of that Lion, that is greedy to devour: 'In the ſnare of 'the Devil, led captive by him at his will, 2 *Tim.* '2. 26. This is the ſpirit that worketh in the chil-'dren of diſobedience, *Epheſ.* 2. 2. His drudges they

are, and his luſts they do. He is the ruler of the darkneſs of this world, *Epheſ.* 6. 12. that is, of ignorant ſinners that live in darkneſs. You pity the poor *Indians*, that worſhip the Devil for their God, but little think that 'tis your own caſe. Why, 'tis the common miſery of all the unſanctified, that the Devil is their God, 2 *Cor.* 4. 4. Not that they do intend to do him homage and worſhip; they will be ready to defie him, and him that ſhould ſay ſo by them; but all this while they ſerve him, and come and go at his beck, and live under his government: His ſervants you are, to whom you yield your ſelves to obey, *Rom.* 6. 16. Oh, how many then will be found the real ſervants of the Devil, that take themſelves for no other than the children of God! He can no ſooner offer a ſinful delight, or opportunity for your unlawful advantage, but you embrace it. If he ſuggeſt a lie, or prompt you to revenge, you readily obey: If he forbid you to read, or pray, you harken to him, and therefore his ſervants you are. Indeed he lies behind the curtain, he Acts in the dark, and ſinners ſee not who ſetteth them on work; but all the while he leads them in a ſtring. Doubtleſs the lyar intends not a ſervice to Satan, but his own advantage; yet 'tis he that ſtands in the corner unobſerved, and putteth the thing into his heart, *Acts* 5. 3. *Joh.* 8. 44. Queſtionleſs, *Judas*, when he ſold his Maſter for money, and the *Chaldeans* and *Sabeans*, when they plundered *Job*, intended not to do the Devil a pleaſure, but to ſatisfie their own covetous thirſt; yet 'twas he that actuated them in their wickedneſs, *Joh.* 13. 27. *Job* 1. 12, 15, 17. Men may be very ſlaves, and common drudges for the Devil, and never know it; nay they may pleaſe themſelves in the thoughts of a happy liberty, 2 *Pet.* 2. 19.

Art thou yet in ignorance, and not turned from darkneſs to light? Why, thou art under the power of

of Satan, *Acts* 26. 18. Doſt thou live in the ordinary and wilful practice of any known ſin? Know that thou art of the Devil, 1 *John* 3. 8. Doſt thou live in ſtrife or envy, or malice? Verily, he is thy father, *Joh.*8. 40.41. O dreadful caſe! However Satan may provide his ſlaves with divers pleaſures, *Tit.* 3. 3. yet it is but to toll them into endleſs perdition. The ſerpent comes with the apple in his mouth, oh but (with *Eve*) thou ſeeſt not the deadly ſting in his tail. He that is now thy tempter, will be one day thy tormentor. Oh that I could but give thee to ſee how black a Maſter thou ſerveſt, how filthy a drudgery thou doſt, how mercileſs a tyrant thou gratifieſt; all whoſe pleaſure is, to ſet thee on work to make thy perdition and damnation ſure, and to heat the furnace hotter and hotter, in which thou muſt burn for millions of *millions of Ages.*

IV. *The guilt of all thy ſins lies like a mountain upon thee.* Poor ſoul! Thou feeleſt it not, but this is that which ſeals thy miſery upon thee. While unconverted, none of thy ſins are blotted out, *Acts* 3. 19. they are all upon the ſcore againſt thee: Regeneration and remiſſion are never ſeparated; the unſanctified are unqueſtionably unjuſtified and unpardoned, 1 *Cor.* 6. 11. 1 *Pet.* 1. 2. *Heb.* 9. 14. Beloved, 'tis a fearful thing to be in debt, but above all in God's debt; for there is no arreſt ſo formidable as his, no priſon ſo horrible as his. Look upon an enlightned ſinner, who feels the weight of his own guilt: Oh, how frightful are his looks, how fearful are his complaints! His comforts are turned into wormwood, and his moiſture into drought, and his ſleep departed from his eyes. He is a terror to himſelf, and all that are about him; and is ready to envy the very ſtones that lie in the ſtreet, becauſe they are ſenſeleſs, and feel not his miſery; and wiſhed he had been a dog, or a toad

or a serpent, rather than a man, because then death had put an end to his misery, where as now it will be but the beginning of that which will know no ending.

How light soever you may make of it now, you will one day find the guilt of unpardoned sin to be a heavy burden. This is a Mill-stone that whosoever falleth upon it, shall be broken; but upon whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder, *Matth.* 21. 44. What work did it make with our Saviour? It pressed the very blood (to a wonder) out of his veins, and broke all his bones. And if it did this in the green tree, what will it do in the dry?

Oh! Think of thy case in time. Canst thou not think of that threat without trembling, *Ye shall die in your sins*, Joh. 8. 24. Oh! Better were it for thee to die in a goal, die in a ditch, in a dungeon, then die in thy sins. If death, as it will take away all thy other comforts, would take away thy sins too, it were some mitigation; but thy sins will follow thee, when thy friends leave thee, and all worldly enjoyments shake hands with thee: Thy sins will not die with thee, 2 *Cor.* 5. 10. *Rev.* 20. 12. as a prisoner's other debts will; but they will to judgment with thee, there to be thine accusers! and they will to hell with thee, there to be thy tormentors. Better to have so many fiends and furies about thee, than thy sins to fall upon thee, and fasten in thee. Oh, the work that these will make thee! Oh, look over thy debts in time! How much art thou in the books of every one of God's laws? How is every one of Gods commandments ready to arrest thee, and take thee by the throat, for innumerable bonds that it hath upon thee? What wilt thou do then, when they shall all together lay in against thee? Hold open the eyes of conscience to consider this, that thou mayest despair

of

of thy self, and be driven to Christ, and fly for refuge to lay hold upon the hope that is set before thee, *Heb.* 6. 18.

V. *Thy raging lusts do miserably enslave thee.* While unconverted, thou art a very servant to sin, it reigns over thee, and holds thee under its dominion, till thou art brought within the bonds of God's covenant, *Joh.* 8. 34, 36. *Tit.* 3. 3. *Rom.* 6. 12, 14. *Rom.* 6. 16, 17. Now there's no such Tyrant as sin: O the filthy and fearful work that it doth engage its servants in! Would it not pierce a man's heart to see a company of poor creatures drudging and toiling, and all to carry together faggots and fuel for their own burning? Why, this is the employment of sin's drudges: Even while they bless themselves in their unrighteous gains, while they sung and swill in pleasures, they are but treasuring up wrath and vengeance for their eternal burnings; they are but laying in powder and bullets, and adding to the pile of *Tophet*, and flinging in oyl to make the flame rage the fiercer. Who would serve such a master, whose work is drudgery, and whose wages is death? *Rom.* 6. 23.

What a woful spectacle was that poor wretch possessed with the legion? Would it not have pitied thine heart to have seen him among the tombs, cutting and wounding of himself *Mark* 5. 5. This is thy case, such is thy work, every stroke is a thrust at thine heart, 1 *Tim.* 6. 10. Conscience indeed is now asleep? But when death and judgment shall bring thee to thy senses, then wilt thou feel the raging smart and anguish of every wound. The convinced sinner is a sensible instance of the miserable bondage of sin: Conscience flies upon him, and tells him what the end of these things will be? and yet such a slave is he to his lusts, that on he must though he see it will be his endless perdition; and

when the temptation comes, luſt gets the bitt in his mouth, breaks all the cords of his vows and promiſes, and carries him headlong to his own deſtruction.

VI. *The furnace of eternal vengeance is heated ready for thee*, Iſa. 30. 33. Hell and deſtruction open their mouths upon thee, they gape for thee, they groan for thee, *Iſa.* 5. 14. waiting as it were with a greedy eye, as thou ſtandeſt upon the brink, when thou wilt drop in. If the wrath of man be *as the roaring of a lion*, Prov. 20. 2. *more heavy than the ſand*, Prov. 27. 3. what is the wrath of the infinite God? If the burning furnace heated in *Nebuchadnezzar*'s fiery rage, when he commanded it to be made yet ſeven times horter, were ſo fierce as to burn up even thoſe that drew near it to throw the three children in *Dan.* 3. 19, 22. how hot is that burning oven of the Almighty's fury? *Mal.* 4. 1. Surely this is ſeventy times ſeven more fierce. What thinkeſt thou, O man, of being a faggot in hell to all eternity? *Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be ſtrong in the day that I ſhall deal with thee, ſaith the Lord of hoſts?* Ezek. 22. 14. Canſt thou dwell with everlaſting burnings? Canſt thou abide the conſuming fire? *Iſa.* 33. 4. When thou ſhalt be as a glowing iron in hell, and thy whole body and ſoul ſhall be as perfectly poſſeſſed by God's burning vengeance, as the fiery ſparkling iron, when heated or in the fierceſt forge? Thou canſt not bear God's whip, how then wilt thou endure his ſcorpions? Thou art even cruſhed, and ready to wiſh thy ſelf dead, under the weight of his finger; how then wilt thou bear the weight of his loins? The moſt patient man that ever was, did curſe the day that ever he was born, *Job* 3. 1. and even wiſh death to come and end his miſery, *Job* 7. 15, 16. when God did but let out one little drop of his wrath: How then wilt thou endure, when God

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ſhall power out all his vials and ſet himſelf againſt thee, to torment thee? When he ſhall make thy conſcience the tunnel, by which he will be powering his burning wrath into thy ſoul for ever; and when he ſhall fill all thy powers as full of torment, as they be now full of ſin? When immortality ſhall be thy miſery; and to die the death of a brute, and be ſwallowed into the gulf of annihilation, ſhall be ſuch a felicity, as the whole eternity of wiſhes, and an ocean of tears ſhall never purchaſe? Now thou canſt put off the evil day, and canſt laugh and be merry, and forget the terror of the Lord, 2 *Cor.* 5. 11. but how wilt thou hold out, or hold up, when God will caſt thee into a bed of torments, *Rev.* 2. 21. and make thee to lie down in ſorrows? *Iſa.* 50. 11. When roarings and blaſphemy ſhall be thine only muſick; and the wine of the wrath of God, which is powered out without mixture, into the cup of his indignation, ſhall be thine only drink? *Rev.* 14. 10. When thou ſhalt draw in flames for thy breath, and the horrid ſtench of ſulpher ſhall be thy only perfume? In a word, when the ſmoak of thy torment ſhall aſcend for ever and ever, and thou ſhalt have no reſt, night nor day; no reſt in thy conſcience, no eaſe in thy bones, but thou ſhalt be an execration, and an aſtoniſhment, and a curſe, and a reproach for evermore? *Jer.* 42. 18.

O ſinner ſtop here, and conſider: If thou art a man, and not a ſenſeleſs block, conſider: Bethink thy ſelf where thou ſtandeſt; why, upon the very brink of his furnace. As the Lord liveth, and thy ſoul liveth, there is but a ſtep between thee and this, 1 *Sam.* 20. 3. Thou knoweſt not when thou lieſt down, but thou mayeſt be in before the morning: Thou knoweſt not when thou riſeſt, but thou mayeſt drop in before the night. Dareſt thou make light of this? Wilt thou go on in ſuch a dreadful condition,

when the temptation comes, lust gets the bitt in his mouth, breaks all the cords of his vows and promises, and carries him headlong to his own destruction.

VI. *The furnace of eternal vengeance is heated ready for thee*, Isa. 30. 33. Hell and destruction open their mouths upon thee, they gape for thee, they groan for thee, *Isa.* 5. 14. waiting as it were with a greedy eye, as thou standest upon the brink, when thou wilt drop in. If the wrath of man be *as the roaring of a lion*, Prov. 20. 2. *more heavy than the sand*, Prov. 27. 3. what is the wrath of the infinite God? If the burning furnace heated in *Nebuchadnezzar*'s fiery rage, when he commanded it to be made yet seven times hotter, were so fierce as to burn up even those that drew near it to throw the three children in *Dan.* 3. 19, 22. how hot is that burning oven of the Almighty's fury? *Mal.* 4. 1. Surely this is seventy times seven more fierce. What thinkest thou, O man, of being a faggot in hell to all eternity? *Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be strong in the day that I shall deal with thee, saith the Lord of hosts?* Ezek. 22. 14. Canst thou dwell with everlasting burnings? Canst thou abide the consuming fire? *Isa.* 33. 4. When thou shalt be as a glowing iron in hell, and thy whole body and soul shall be as perfectly possessed by God's burning vengeance, as the fiery sparkling iron, when heated or in the fiercest forge? Thou canst not bear God's whip, how then wilt thou endure his scorpions? Thou art even crushed, and ready to wish thy self dead, under the weight of his finger; how then wilt thou bear the weight of his loins? The most patient man that ever was, did curse the day that ever he was born, *Job* 3. 1. and even wish death to come and end his misery, *Job* 7. 15, 16. when God did but let out one little drop of his wrath: How then wilt thou endure, when God

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as if nothing ailed thee? If thou putteſt it off, and ſayeſt, this doth not belong to thee; look again over the foregoing chapter, and tell me the truth: Are none of theſe black marks found upon thee? Do not blind thine eyes, do not deceive thy ſelf; ſee thy miſery while thou mayeſt prevent it: Think what it is to be a vile caſt out, a damned reprobate a veſſel of wrath, into which the Lord will be pouring out his tormenting fury, while he hath a being, *Rom.* 9. 22.

Divine wrath is a fierce, *Deut.* 32. 22. devouring, *Iſa.* 33. 14. everlaſting, *Mat.* 25. 41. unquenchable fire, *Mat.* 3. 12. and thy ſoul and body muſt be the fuel upon which it will be feeding for ever, unleſs thou conſider thy ways, and ſpeedily turn to the Lord by a ſound converſion. They that have been only ſinged by this fire, and had no more but the ſmell thereof paſſing upon them; oh, what amazing ſpectacle have they been! Whoſe heart would not have melted, to have heard *Spira*'s out-cries? To have ſeen *Chaloner*, that monument of juſtice, worn to Skin and Bones, blaſpheming the God of heaven, curſing himſelf, and continually crying out, *O torture, torture, torture*; *O torture, torture*, as if the flames of wrath had already took hold on him? To have heard *Rogers* crying out, *I have had a little pleaſure, but now I muſt to hell for evermore*; wiſhing but for this mitigation, that God would but let him lie burning for ever behind the back of that fire (on the earth) and bringing in this ſad concluſion ſtill? at the end of whatſoever was ſpoken to him to afford him ſome hope, *I muſt to hell, I muſt to the furnace of hell, for millions of millions of ages?* Oh! If the fears and fore-thoughts of the wrath to come be ſo terrible, ſo intolerable, what is the feeling of it?

Sinner, 'tis but in vain to flatter you, this would be but to tol you into the unquenchable fire; know

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ye from the living God, that here you muſt lie, with theſe burnings muſt you dwell, till immortality die, and immutability change; till eternity run out, and omnipotency is not longer able to torment, except you be in good earneſt renewed throughout by ſanctifying grace.

VII. *The law diſchargeth all its threats and curſes at thee*, Gal. 3. 10. Rom. 7. Oh, how dreadfully doth it thunder! It ſpits fire and brimſtone in thy face: Its words, are as drawn ſwords, and as the ſharp arrows of the mighty: It demands ſatisfaction to the utmoſt, and cries, Juſtice, Juſtice: It ſpeaks blood, and war, and wounds, and death againſt thee. O the execrations, and plagues and deaths, that this murdering-piece is loaded with! (read *Deut.* 28. 15, 16, *&c.*) and thou art the mark at which this ſhot is levelled. O man! Away to the ſtrong-hold, *Zech.* 9. 12. Away from thy ſins, haſte to the ſanctuary, the city of refuge, *Heb.* 13. 13. even the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; hide thee in him, or elſe thou art loſt, without any hope of recovery.

VIII. *The Goſpel it ſelf bindeth the ſentence of eternal damnation upon thee*, Mark 16. 16. If thou continueſt in thine impenitent and unconverted eſtate, know that the Goſpel denounceth a much ſorer condemnation, than ever would have been for the tranſgreſſion only of the firſt covenant. Is it not a dreadful caſe to have the Goſpel it ſelf fill its mouth with threats, and thunder, and damnation? 'To have the Lord to roar from *Mount Sion* againſt 'thee? *Joel* 3. 16. *Hear the terrour of the Lord.* He 'that believeth not ſhall be damned: Except ye re'pent, ye ſhall all periſh, *Luke* 13. 3. This is the con'demnation, that light is come into the world, and '*men* love darkneſs rather than light, *Joh.* 3. 19. 'He that believeth not, the wrath of God abideth on 'him, *Joh.* 3. 36. If the word ſpoken by *Angels* was

'ſtedfaſt,

'ſteadfaſt, and every tranſgreſſion and diſobedience 'received a juſt recompence of reward, how ſhall 'we eſcape, if we neglect ſo great ſalvation? *Heb.* '2. 2, 3. He that deſpiſed *Moſe's* law died without 'mercy: Of how much ſorer puniſhment ſhall he 'be thought worthy, that hath trampled under foot 'the ſun of God? *Heb.* 10. 28, 29.

Application. And is this true indeed? Is this thy miſery? Yea, 'tis as true as God is. Better open thine eyes, and ſee it now, while thou mayeſt remedy it, than blind and harden thy ſelf, till, to thine eternal ſorrow, thou ſhalt feel what thou wouldſt not believe: And if it be true, what doſt thou mean, to loyter and linger in ſuch a caſe as this?

Alas for thee, poor man! How effectually hath ſin undone thee, and deprived and deſpoiled thee, even of thy reaſon to look after thine own everlaſting good? O miſerable Caitiff! What ſtupidity and ſenſeleſneſs hath ſurpriſed thee? Oh! Let me knock up, and awake this ſleeper. Who dwells within the walls of this fleſh? Is there ever a ſoul here, a rational, underſtanding ſoul? Or art thou only a walking ghoſt, a ſenſeleſs lump? Art thou a reaſonable ſoul, and yet ſo far brutified, as to forget thy ſelf immortal, and to think thy ſelf to be as the beaſts that periſh? Art thou turned into fleſh? that thou ſavoureſt nothing but gratifying the ſenſe, and making proviſion for the fleſh? Or elſe having reaſon to underſtand the eternity of thy future eſtate, doſt thou yet make light of being everlaſtingly miſerable? Which is to be ſo much below a brute, as it is worſe to act againſt reaſon, than to act without it. O unhappy ſoul, that waſt the glory of man, the mate of Angels, and the image of God! that waſt God's repreſentative in the world, and hadſt the ſupremacy amongſt the creatures, and the dominion over thy Maker's works! Art thou now become

become a ſlave to ſence, a ſerpent to ſo baſe an idol as thy belly; for no higher felicity than to fill thee with the wind of man's applauſe, or heaping together a little refined earth, no more ſuitable to thy ſpiritual, immortal nature, than the dirt and ſticks? Oh, why doſt thou not bethink thee where thou ſhall be for ever? Death is at hand, *The Judge is even at the door*, Jam. 5. 9. Yet a little while, and *time ſhall be no longer*, Rev. 10. 5, 6. And wilt thou run the hazard of continuing in ſuch a ſtate, in which, if thou be overtaken, thou art irrecoverably miſerable.

Come then, Ariſe, and attend thy neareſt concernments. Tell me: Whither art thou going? What! Wilt thou live in ſuch a courſe, wherein every act is a ſtep to perdition; and thou doſt not know, but the next night thou mayeſt make thy bed in hell? Oh! If thou haſt a ſpark of reaſon, conſider, and turn, and hearken to thy very friend, who would therefore ſhew thee thy preſent miſery, that thou mighteſt in time make thine eſcape, and be eternally happy.

Hear what the Lord ſaith: *Fear ye not me, ſaith the Lord? Will ye not tremble at my preſence*, Jer. 5. 22. O ſinners! Do ye make light *of the wrath to come?* Matt. 3. 7. I am ſure there is a time coming, when you will not make light of it. Why the very *devils do believe and tremble*, Jam. 2. 19. What! You more hardened than they! Will you run upon the edge of the rock? Will you play at the hole of the Aſp? Will you put your hand upon the Cockatrice's den? Will you dance about the fire, till you are burnt; or dally with devouring wrath, as if you were at a point of indifferency, whether you did eſcape it, or endure it; O madneſs of folly! *Solomon*'s mad-man; that caſteth fire-brands, and arrows, and death, and ſaith, *Am I not in jeſt?* Prov. 26. 18. is nothing ſo

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diſtracted as the wilful ſinner, *Luke* 15. 17. that goeth on in his unconverted eſtate without ſenſe, as if nothing ailed him. The man that runs on the cannon's mouth, that ſports with his blood, or lets out his life in a frolick, is ſenſible, ſober and ſerious, to him that goeth on ſtill in his treſpaſſes, *Pſal.* 68. 21. *For he ſtretcheth out his hand againſt God, and ſtrengthneth himſelf againſt the Almighty: He runneth upon him, even upon his neck,* upon *the thick boſſes of his buckler,* Job 15. 25, 26. Is it wiſdom to dally with the ſecond death, or to venture into the lake that burneth with fire and brimſtone, *Rev.* 21. 8. as if thou wert but going to waſh thee, or ſwim for thy recreation? Wilt thou, as it were, fetch thy vize, and jump into eternal flames, as the children through the bone fire? What ſhall I ſay? I can find out no expreſſion, no compariſon, whereby to ſet forth the dreadful diſtraction of that ſoul, that ſhall go on in ſin.

Awake, Awake, *Epheſ.* 5. 14. O ſinner! Ariſe and take thy flight: There is but one door that thou mayeſt fly by, and that is the ſtrait door of converſion, and the new birth. Unleſs thou turn unfeignedly from all thy ſins, and come into Jeſus Chriſt, and take him for the Lord thy righteouſneſs! And walk in him in holineſs and newneſs of life: As the Lord liveth, it is not more certain that thou art now out of hell, than that thou ſhalt without fail be in it, but a few days and nights from hence. Oh, ſet thine heart to think of thy caſe. Is not thine everlaſting miſery or welfare that which doth deſerve a little conſideration? Look again over the miſeries of the unconverted: If the Lord hath not ſpoken by me, regard me not; but if it be the very word of God, that all this miſery lies upon thee, what a caſe art thou in? Is it for one that hath his ſences to live in ſuch a condition, and not to make all poſſible

expedition

expedition for preventing his utter ruin? O man! Who hath bewitched thee, *Gal.* 3. 1. that in the matters of this preſent life thou ſhouldſt be wiſe enough to forecaſt thy buſineſs, foreſee thy danger, and prevent thy miſchief; but in matters of everlaſting conſequence ſhouldſt be ſlight and careleſs, as if they little concerned thee? Why, Is it nothing to thee, to have all the attributes of God engaged againſt thee? Canſt thou do well without his favour? Canſt thou eſcape his hands or endure his vengeance? Doſt thou hear the creation groaning under thee, and hell groaning for thee, and yet think thy caſe good enough? Art thou in the paw of the Lion, under the power of corruption, in the dark and noiſome priſon, fetter'd with thy luſts working out thine own damnation; and is not this worth the conſidering? Wilt thou make light of all the terrours of the law, of all its curſes and thunder-bolts, as if they were but the report of the children's pot-guns, or thou wert to war with their paper-pellets? Doſt thou laugh at hell and deſtruction, or canſt thou drink the evenomed cup of the Almighty's fury, as if it were but a common portion?

Gird up now thy loins like a man, for I will demand of thee, and anſwer thou me, *Job* 40. 7. Art thou ſuch a *Leviathan*, as that the ſcales of thy pride ſhou'd keep thee from thy Maker's coming at thee? Wilt thou eſteem his arrows as ſtraw, and the inſtruments of death as rotten wood? Art thou chief of all the children of pride, even that thou ſhouldſt count his darts as ſtubble, and laugh at the ſhaking of his ſpear? Art thou made without fear, and contemneſt his barbed irons? *Job* 41. Art thou like the horſe that paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his ſtrength, who goeth out to meet the armed men? Doſt thou mock at fear, and art not affrighted, neither turneſt back from God's ſword, when his quiver

ver ratleth againſt thee, the glittering ſpear and the ſhield? *Job* 39. 21, 22, 23. Well, if the threats and calls of the word will not fear thee, nor awaken thee, I am ſure death and judgment will. Oh, what wilt thou do when the Lord cometh forth againſt thee, and in his fury falleth upon thee, and thou ſhalt feel what thou readeſt! If when *Daniel*'s enemies were caſt into the den of Lions, both they, and their wives, and their children, the Lions had the maſtery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces, ere ever they came at the bottom of the den, *Dan.* 6. 24. What ſhall be done with thee, when thou falleſt into the hands of the living god? When he ſhall gripe thee in his iron arms, and grind and cruſh thee to a thouſand pieces in his wrath?

Oh, do not then contend with God, Repent and be converted, ſo none of this ſhall come upon thee; *Iſa.* 55. 6, 7. *Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy on him; and to our God for he will abundantly pardon.*

Chap. VI. *Containing* DIRECTIONS *for Converſion.*

Mark 10. 17. *And there came one, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Maſter, what ſhall I do that I may inherit eternal life?*

BEfore thou readeſt theſe directions, I adviſe thee, yea, I charge thee before God, and his holy Angels to reſolve to follow them (as far as conſcience ſhall be convinced of their agreeableneſs to God's word, and thy eſtate) and call in his aſſiſtance

ſtance and bleſſing, that they may ſucceed. And as I have ſought the Lord, and conſulted his oracles, what advice to give thee, ſo muſt thou entertain it with that awe, reverence, and purpoſe of obedience, that the word of the living God doth require.

Now then attend. *Set thine heart unto all that I ſhall teſtifie unto thee in thu day; for it is not a vain thing, it is your life*, Deut. 32. 46. This is the end of all that hath been ſpoken hitherto, to bring you to ſet upon turning, and making uſe of God's means for your converſion. I wou'd not trouble you, nor torment you before the time, with the forethoughts of your eternal miſery, but in order to your making your eſcape. Were you ſhut up under your preſent miſery, without remedy, it were but mercy (as one ſpeaks) to let you alone, that you might take in that little poor comfort that you are capable of here in this world: But you may yet be happy, if you do not wilfully refuſe the means of your recovery. Behold, I hold open the door unto you; ariſe, take your flight: I ſet the way of life before you; walk in it, and you ſhall live and not die, *Deut.* 30. 19. *Jer.* 9. 16. It pities me to think you ſhould be your own murderers, and throw your ſelves headlong, when God and men cry out to you, as *Peter*, in another caſe, to his Maſter, *Spare thy ſelf.* A noble Virgin, that attended the Court of *Spain*, was wickedly raviſhed by the King, and hereupon exciting the Duke, her Father, to revenge, he called in the *Moors* to his help; who, when they had executed his deſign, miſerably waſted and ſpoiled the country; which this Virgin laying ſo exceedingly to heart, ſhut her ſelf up in a tower belonging to her father's houſe, and deſired her father and mother might be called forth; and bewailing to them her own wretchedneſs, that ſhe ſhould have occaſioned ſo much miſery and deſolation to her country,

try for the ſatisfying of her Revenge, ſhe told them, ſhe was reſolved to be avenged upon her ſelf. Her father and mother beſought her to pity her ſelf and them, but nothing could prevail, but ſhe took her leave of them, and threw her ſelf off the battlements and ſo periſhed before their faces.

Juſt thus is the wilful deſtruction of ungodly men. The God that made them beſeecheth them, and cryeth out to them, as *Paul*, to the diſtracted Jaylor, when about to murder himſelf, *Do thy ſelf no harm.* The Miniſters of Chriſt forewarn them, and follow them, and fain would have them back; but alas! no expoſtulations nor obteſtations will prevail, but men will hurle themſelves into perdition, while pity it ſelf looketh on.

What ſhall I ſay? Would it not grieve a perſon of any humanity, if in the time of a reigning plague he ſhould have a receipt (as one ſaid well) that would infallibly cure all the country, and recover the moſt hopleſs patients, and yet his friends and neighbours ſhould die by the hundreds about him, becauſe they would not uſe it? Men and brethren, though you carry the certain ſymptoms of death in your faces, yet I have a receipt that will cure you all, that will cure infallibly: Follow but theſe few directions, and if you do not then win heaven, I will be content to loſe it.

Hear then, O ſinner! and as ever thou wouldſt be converted and ſaved, embrace this following counſel.

Direct. I. *Set it down with thy ſelf, as an undoubted truth, that it is impoſſible for thee ever to get to heaven in this thy unconverted ſtate.* Can any other but Chriſt ſave thee? and he tells thee, he will never do it, except thou be regenerated, and converted, *Mat.* 18. 3. *Joh.* 3. 3. Doth he not keep the keys of heaven? And canſt thou get in without his leave? As thou muſt, if ever thou comeſt thither in thy natural condition,

dition without a ſound and through renovation?

Direct. II. *Labour to get a through ſight, and lively ſenſe and feeling of thy ſins.* Till men are weary and heavy laden, and pricked at the heart, and ſtark ſick of ſin, they will not come unto Chriſt, in his way, for eaſe and cure; nor to purpoſe enquire, *What ſhall we do?* Matth. 11. 28. Act. 2. 37. Matth. 9. 12. They muſt ſet themſelves down for dead men before they will come unto Chriſt, that they may have life, *Joh.* 5. 40. Labour therefore to ſet all thy ſins in order before thee; never be afraid to look upon them, but let thy ſpirit make diligent ſearch *Pſal.* 77. 6. Enquire into thine heart, and into thy life; enter into a thorow examination of thy ſelf, and of all thy ways, *Pſal.* 119. 59. that thou mayeſt make a full diſcovery? and call in the help of God's Spirit, in the ſenſe of thine own inability hereunto, for it is his proper work to convince of ſin, *Joh.* 16. 8. Spread all before the face of thy conſcience, till thine heart and eyes be ſet abroach. Leave not ſtriving with God, and thine own ſoul till it cry out under the ſence of thy ſins, as the enlightned Jaylor, *What muſt I do to be ſaved?* Act. 16. 30. To this purpoſe.

Meditate of the numerouſneſs of thy ſins. David's heart failed when he thought of this, and conſidered that he had more ſins than heirs, *Pſal.* 40. 12. This made him cry out upon the multitudes of God's tender mercies, *Pſal.* 51. 1. The loathſome carcaſe doth not more hatefully ſwarm with crawling worms, than an unſanctified ſoul with filthy luſts; they fill the head, the heart, the eyes and mouth of him. Look backward: Where was ever the place, what was ever the time, in which thou didſt not ſin,? Look inward: What part or power canſt thou find in ſoul or body but it is poiſoned with ſin? What duty doſt thou ever perform, into which poiſon is not ſhed? Oh,

how

how great is the ſumm of thy debts, who haſt been all thy life long running upon the books, and never didſt, nor canſt pay off one penny! Look over the ſin of thy nature, and all its curſed brood, the ſins of thy life: Call to mind thy omiſſions, commiſſions, the ſins of thy thoughts, of thy words, of thine actions, the ſins of thy youth, the ſins of thy years, *&c.* Be not like a deſperate Bankrupt, that is afraid to look over his books. Read the records of conſcience carefully. Theſe books muſt be opened ſooner or later, *Rev.* 20. 12.

Meditate upon the aggravations of thy ſins, as they are the grand enemies againſt the God of thy life, againſt the life of thy ſoul; in a word, they are the publick enemies of all mankind. How do *David*, *Ezra*, *Daniel*, and the good *Levites* aggravate their ſins, from the conſideration of their injuriouſneſs to God, their oppoſition to his good and righteous laws, the mercies, the warnings that they were committed againſt, *Neh.* 9. *Dan.* 9. *Ezra* 9. O the work that ſin hath made in the world. This is the enemy that hath brought in death, that hath robbed and enſlaved man, that hath blacked the Devil, that hath digged hell, *Rom* 5. 12, 2. *Pet.* 2. 4. *Joh.* 8. 34. This is the enemy that hath turned the creation upſide down, and ſown diſſention between man and the creatures, between man and man, yea between man and himſelf, ſetting the ſenſitive part againſt the rational, the will againſt the judgment, luſt againſt conſcience; yea, worſt of all, between God and man, making the lapſed ſinner both hateful to God, and the hater of him, *Zech.* 11. 8. O man! How canſt thou make ſo light of ſin? This is the traytor that ſucked the blood of the Son of God, that ſold him, that mocked him, that ſcourged him, that ſpit in his face, that digged his hands, that pierced his ſide, that preſſed his ſoul, that mangled his body, that never left, till he had bound him,

him, condemned him, nailed him, crucified him, and put him to open shame, *Isa.* 53. 4, 5, 6. This is that deadly poison, so powerful of operation, as that one drop of it shed upon the root of mankind, hath corrupted, spoiled, and poisoned, and undone his whole race at once, *Rom.* 5. 18, 19. This is the common butcher, the bloody executioner, that hath killed the Prophets, burnt the Martyrs, murdered all the Apostles, all the Patriarchs, all the Kings and Potentates, that hath destroyed Cities, swallowed Empires, butchered and devoured whole Nations. Whatever was the weapon that 'twas done by, sin was it that did execution, *Rom.* 6. 23. Dost thou yet think it but a small thing? If *Adam* and all his children could be digged out of their graves, and their bodies piled up to heaven, and an inquest were made, what matchless murderer were guilty of all this blood; it would be all found in the Skirts of sin Study the nature of sin, till thy heart be brought to fear and loath it. And meditate on the aggravations of thy particular sins, how thou hast sinned against all God's warnings, against thine own prayers, against mercies, against corrections, against clearest light, against freest love, against thine own resolutions, against promises, vows, covenants of better obedience, *&c.* Charge thine heart home with these things, till it blush for shame, and be brought out of all good opinion of it self, *Ezra* 9. 6.

Meditate upon the desert of sin. It cryeth up to heaven: It calls for vengeance, *Gen.* 18. 21. Its due wages is death and damnation: It pulls the curse of God upon the soul and body, *Gal.* 3. 10. *Deut.* 28. The least sinful word or thought lays thee under the infinite wrath of God Almighty, *Rom.* 2. 8, 9. *Matth.* 12. 36. Oh, what a load of wrath, what a weight of curses, what treasure of vengeance have all the millions of thy sins then deserved? *Rom.* 2. 5.

Job.

Joh. 3. 36. Oh, judge thy self, that the Lord may not judge thee, 1 *Cor.* 11. 31.

Meditate upon the deformity and defilement of sin. 'Tis as black as hell, the very image and likeness of the Devil drawn upon the soul, 1. *Joh.* 3. 8, 10. It would more affright thee to see thy self in the hateful deformity of thy nature, than to see the Devil. There is no mire so unclean, no vomit so loathsome, no carcase or carrion so offensive, no plague or leprosie so noisome as sin, in which thou art all inrolled, and covered with its odious filth, whereby thou art rendred more displeasing to the pure and holy nature of the glorious God, than the most filthy object, composed of whatever is hateful to all thy senses, can be to thee, *Job* 15. 15, 16. Couldst thou take up a Toad into thy bosom? Couldst thou cherish it, and take delight in it? Why, thou art as contrary to the pure and perfect holiness of the divine nature, and as loathsome as that is to thee, *Matth.* 3. 33. till thou art purified by the blood of Jesus, and the power of renewing grace.

Above all other sins, fix the eye of consideration on these two. 1. *The sin of thy nature.* 'Tis to little purpose to lop the branches, while the root of original corruption remains untouched. In vain do men lave out the streams, when the fountain is running, that fills up all again. Let the axe of thy repentance (with *David's*) go to the root of sin, *Psal.* 51. 5. Study how deep, how close, how permanent is thy natural pollution, how universal it is, till thou dost cry out, with *Paul's* feeling, upon thy body of death, *Rom.* 7. 2. Look into all thy parts and powers, and see what unclean vessels, what styes, what dunghills, what sinks they are become, *Heu miser, quid sum? vas sterquilinii, concha putredinis; plenus fœtore & horrore*, August. Solil. c. 2. The heart is never

ſoundly broken, till throughly convinced of the heinouſneſs of original ſin. Here fix thy thoughts, this is that, that makes thee backward to all good, prone to all evil, *Rom.* 7. 15. that ſheds blindneſs, pride, prejudice, unbelief, into thy mind; enmity, unconſtancy, obſtinacy, into thy will, inordinate heats and colds into thy affections; inſenſibleneſs, benummedneſs, unfaithfulneſs, into thy conſcience; ſlipperineſs into thy memory; and, in a word, hath put every wheel of thy ſoul out of order, and made it, of an habitation of holineſs, to become a very hell of iniquity. *Jam.* 3. 6. This is that that hath defiled, corrupted, perverted all thy members, and turned them into weapons of unrighteouſneſs, and ſervants of ſin, *Rom.* 6. 19. that hath filled the head with carnal and corrupt deſigns, *Mic.* 2. 1. the hand with ſinful practices, *Iſa.* 1. 15. the eyes with wandring and wantonneſs, 2 *Pet.* 2. 14. the tongue with deadly poyſon, *Jam.* 3. 8. that hath opened the ears to tales, flattery, and filthy communication, and ſhut them againſt the inſtruction of life, *Zech.* 7. 11, 12. and hath rendred thy heart a very mint and forge for ſin, and the curſed womb of all deadly conceptions, *Matth.* 15. 16. ſo that it poureth forth its wickedneſs without ceaſing, 2 *Pet.* 2. 14. even as naturally, freely, and unweariedly, as a fountain doth power forth its waters, *Jer.* 6. 7. or the raging ſea doth caſt forth mire and dirt, *Iſa.* 57. 20. And wilt thou yet be in love with thy ſelf and tell us any longer of thy good heart? Oh, never leave meditating on this deſperate contagion of original corruption, till, with *Ephraim*, thou bemoan thy ſelf, *Jer.* 31. 18. and with deepeſt ſhame and ſorrow, ſmite on thy breaſt, as the Publican, *Luk.* 18. 13. and with *Job*, abhor thy ſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes, *Job* 42. 6, 22. The particular evil that thou art moſt addicted to, find out all its aggravations, ſet

home

home upon thy heart all God's threatnings againſt it: Repentance drives before it the whole herd, but eſpecially ſticks the arrow in the beloved ſin, and ſingles this out, above the reſt to run it down, *Pſal.* 18. 23. Oh, labour to make this ſin odious to thy ſoul, and double thy guards, and thy reſolutions againſt it, becauſe this hath, and doth moſt diſhonour God, and endanger thee.

Direct. III. *Strive to affect thy heart with a deep ſenſe of thy preſent miſery.* Read over the foregoing chapter again, and again, and get it out of the book, into thine heart. Remember when thou lieſt down, that for ought thou knoweſt, thou mayeſt awake in flames; and when thou riſeſt up, that by the next night thou mayeſt make thy bed in hell. Is it a juſt matter to live in ſuch a fearful caſe? To ſtand tottering upon the brink of the bottomleſs pit, and to live at the mercy of every diſeaſe, that if it will but fall upon thee, will ſend thee forthwith into the burnings? Suppoſe thou ſaweſt a condemned wretch hanging over *Nebuchadnezzar*'s burning fiery furnace, by nothing but a twine thread, which were ready to break every moment, would not thine heart tremble for ſuch an one? Why, thou art the man: This is thy very caſe, O man, woman, that readeſt this, if thou be yet unconverted. What if the thread of thy life ſhould break? (Why, thou knoweſt not but it may be the next night, yea the next moment.) Where wouldſt thou be then? Whither wouldſt thou drop? Verily upon the crack but of this thread, thou falleſt into the lake that burneth with fire and brimſtone; where thou muſt lie ſcalding and ſweltering in a fiery ocean, while God hath a being, if thou die in thy preſent caſe. And doth not thy ſoul tremble as thou readeſt? Doth not thy tears bedew the paper, and thy heart throb in thy boſom? Doſt thou not yet begin to ſmite on thy breaſt, and

bethink

bethink thy ſelf what need thou haſt of a change? Oh, what is thy heart made of? Haſt thou not only loſt all regard to God, but art without any love and pity to thy ſelf?

Oh, ſtudy thy miſery, till thy heart do cry out for Chriſt, as earneſtly, as ever a drowning man did for a boat, or the wounded for a Chirurgeon. Men muſt come to ſee the danger, and feel the ſmart of their deadly ſores and ſickneſs, or elſe Chriſt will be to them a Phyſician of no value, *Matth.* 9. 12. Then the man-ſlayer haſtens to the city of refuge, when purſued by the avenger of blood. Men muſt be even forced and fired out of themſelves, or elſe they will not come to Chriſt. 'Twas diſtreſs and extremity that made the prodigal think of returning, *Luke* 15 16, 17. While *Laodicea* thinks her ſelf rich, increaſed in goods in need of nothing, there is little hope. She muſt be deeply convinced of her wretchedneſs, blindneſs, poverty, nakedneſs, before ſhe will come to Chriſt for his gold, raiment, eye ſalve, *Rev.* 3. 17, 18. Therefore hold the eyes of conſcience open, amplifie thy miſery as much as poſſible, do not fly the ſight of it, for fear it ſhould fill thee with terrour. The ſenſe of thy miſery is but as it were the ſuppuration of the wound, which is neceſſary to the cure. Better fear the torments that abide thee now, than feel them hereafter.

Direct. IV. *Settle it upon thy heart, that thou art under everlaſting inability ever to recover thy ſelf.* Never think thy praying, reading, hearing, confeſſing, amending, will do the cure. Theſe muſt be attended, but thou art undone if thou reſteſt in them, *Rom.* 10. 3. Thou art a loſt man, If thou hopeſt to eſcape drowning upon any other plank, but Jeſus Chriſt, *Acts* 4. 12. Thou muſt unlearn thy ſelf, and renounce thine own wiſdom, thine own

righteouſneſs, thine own ſtrength, and throw thy ſelf wholly upon Chriſt, as a man that ſwimmeth caſteth himſelf upon the water, or elſe thou canſt not eſcape. While men truſt in themſelves, and eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, and have confidence in the fleſh, they will not come ſavingly to Chriſt, *Luke* 18. 9. *Philip.* 3. 3. Thou muſt know thy gain to be but loſs and dung, thy ſtrength but weakneſs, thy righteouſneſs rags and rottenneſs, before there will be an effectual cloſure between Chriſt and thee, *Philip.* 3. 7, 8, 9. 2 *Cor.* 3. 5. *Iſa.* 64. 6. Can the lifeleſs carcaſe ſhake off its grave-cloaths, and looſe the bonds of death? Then mayeſt thou recover thy ſelf, who art dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, and under an impoſſibility of ſerving thy Maker (acceptably) in this condition, *Rom.* 8. 8. *Heb.* 11. 6. Therefore when thou goeſt to pray, or meditate, or to do any of the duties to which thou art here directed, go out of thy ſelf, call in the help of the Spirit, as deſpairing to do any thing pleaſing to God, in thine own ſtrength; Yet neglect not thy duty, but lie at the pool, and wait in the way of the Spirit. While the *Eunuch* was reading, then the Holy Ghoſt ſent *Philip* to him, *Acts* 8. 28, 29. When the Diſciples were praying, *Acts* 4. 31. when *Cornelius* and his friends were hearing, *Acts* 10. 44. then the Holy Ghoſt fell upon them, and filled them all. Strive to give up thy ſelf to Chriſt, ſtrive to pray, ſtrive to meditate, ſtrive an hundred and an hundred times, try to do it as well as thou canſt; and while thou art endeavouring in the way of thy duty, the Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and help thee to do what of thy ſelf thou art utterly unable unto, *Prov.* 1. 23.

Direct. V. *Forthwith renounce all thy ſins.* If thou yield thy ſelf to the contrary practice of any ſin, thou art undone, *Rom.* 6. 17. In vain doſt thou hope for life

life by Chriſt, except thou depart from iniquity, 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. Forſake thy ſins, or elſe thou canſt not find mercy, *Prov.* 18. 13. Thou canſt not be married to Chriſt, except divorced from ſin. Give up the traitor, or you can have no peace with heaven. Caſt the head of *Sheba* over the wall: Keep not *Dalilah* in thy lap. Thou muſt part with thy ſins or with thy ſoul: Spare but one ſin, and God will not ſpare thee. Never make excuſes, thy ſins muſt die, or thou muſt die for them, *Pſal.* 68. 21. If thou allow of one ſin, though but a little, a ſecret one, though thou mayeſt plead neceſſity, and have a hundred ſhifts and excuſes for it, the life of thy ſoul muſt go for the life of that ſin, *Ezek.* 18. 21. And will it not be dearly bought?

O ſinner, hear and conſider. If thou wilt part with thy ſins, God will give thee his Chriſt. Is not this a fair exchange? I teſtifie unto thee this day, that if thou periſh, it is not becauſe there was never a Saviour provided, nor life tendred, but becauſe thou preferredſt (with the Jews) the murderer before thy Saviour, ſin before Chriſt, and lovedſt darkneſs rather than light, *Joh.* 3. 19. Search thy heart therefore with candles, as the Jews did their houſes for leaven, before the Paſſover: Labour to find out thy ſins, enter into thy cloſet, and conſider, What evil have I lived in? What duty have I neglected towards God? What ſin have I lived in againſt my Brother: And now ſtrike the darts through the heart of thy ſin as *Job* did through *Abſalom*'s, 2 *Sam.* 18. 14. Never ſtand looking upon thy ſin, nor rolling the morſel under thy tongue, *Job* 20. 11. but ſpit it out as poyſon, with fear and deteſtation. Alas! What will thy ſins do for thee, that thou ſhouldſt ſtick, at parting with them? They will flatter thee, but they will undo thee, and cut thy throat, while they

ſmile upon thee, and poyſon thee while they pleaſe thee, and arm the juſtice and wrath of the infinite God againſt thee. They will open hell for thee, and pile up fuel to burn thee. Behold the gibbit that they have prepared for thee. Oh, ſerve them like *Haman*, and do upon them the execution they would elſe have done upon thee. Away with them, crucifie them, and let Chriſt only be Lord over thee.

Direct. VI. *Make a ſolemn choice of God for thy portion and bleſſedneſs*, Deut. 26. With all poſſible devotion and veneration avouch the Lord for thy God. Set the world, with all its glory, and paint, and gallantry, with all its pleaſures and promotions, on the one hand; and ſet God, with all his infinite excellencies and perfections, on the other; and ſee that thou do deliberately make thy choice, *Joſh.* 24. 15. Take up thy reſt in God, *Joh.* 6. 68. Set thee down under his ſhadow, *Cant.* 2. 3. Let his promiſes and perfections turn the ſcale againſt all the world. Settle it upon thy heart that the Lord is an all-ſufficient portion, that thou canſt not be miſerable while thou haſt a God to live upon: Take him for thy ſhield, and exceeding great reward. God alone is more than all the world, content thy ſelf with him: Let others carry the preferments and glory of the world, place thou thy happineſs in his favour, and the light of his countenance, *Pſal.* 4. 6, 7.

Poor ſinner, thou art fallen off from God, and haſt engaged his power and wrath againſt thee: Yet know, that of his abundant grace, he doth offer to be thy God again in Chriſt, 2 *Cor.* 6. 17, 18. What ſayeſt thou, man? Wilt thou have the Lord for thy God? Why, take this counſel, and thou ſhalt have him, Come to him by his Chriſt, *Joh.* 14. 6. Renounce the idols of thine own pleaſures,

gain,

gain, reputation, 1 *Theſ.* 1. 9. Let theſe be pulled out of the throne, and ſet God's intereſt uppermoſt in thine heart: Take him as God, to be chief in thine affections, eſtimations, intentions; for he will not endure to have any ſet above him, *Rom.* 1. 24 *Pſal.* 73. 25. In a word, Thou muſt take him in all his *perſonal Relations*, and in all his *eſſential Perfections.*

Firſt, *In all his perſonal Relations.* God the Father muſt be taken for thy Father, *Jer.* 3. 4, 19, 22. Oh, come to him with the Prodigal, *Father, I have ſinned againſt heaven, and in thy ſight, and am not worthy to be called thy ſon; but ſince of thy wonderful mercy, thou art pleaſed to take me, that am of my ſelf a dog, a ſwine, a devil, to be thy child, I ſolemnly take thee for my Father, commend my ſelf to thy care, and truſt to thy providence, and caſt my burden on thy ſhoulders. I depend on thy proviſion, and ſubmit to thy corrections, and truſt under the ſhadow of thy wings, and hide in thy chambers and fly to thy name. I renounce all confidence in my ſelf, I repoſe my confidence in thee, I depoſe my concernments with thee: I will be for thee and for no other.* Again, God the Son muſt be taken for thy Saviour, for thy Redeemer, and Righteouſneſs, *Joh.* 1. 2. He muſt be accepted as the only way to the Father, and the only means of life, *Heb.* 7. 25. Oh then put off the rayment of thy captivity, on with the wedding garment, and go and marry thy ſelf to Jeſus Chriſt. *Lord, I am thine, and all that I have, my body, my ſoul, my name, my eſtate. I ſend a bill of divorce to my other lovers: I give my heart to thee, I will be thine undividedly, thine everlaſtingly. I will ſet thy name on all I have, and uſe it only as thy goods, as thy loan during thy leave, reſigning all to thee. I will have no King but thee: Reign thou over me. Other Lords have had dominion over me; but now I will make mention of thy name only, and do here take an oath of fealty to thee, promiſing and vowing*

to ſerve, and love, and fear thee, above all competitions. I diſavow mine own righteouſneſs, and deſpair of ever being pardoned and ſaved for mine own duties, or graces, and lean only on thine all-ſufficient ſacrifice and interceſſion, for pardon, and life, and acceptance before God. I take thee for mine only Guide and Inſtructer, reſolving to be led and directed by thee, and to wait for thy counſel, and that thine ſhall be the caſting voice with me. Laſtly, God the Spirit muſt be taken for thy Sanctifier, *Rom.* 8. 9, 14. *Gal.* 5. 16, 18. *for thine Advocate*, thy Counſellor, thy Comforter, the Teacher of thine ignorance, the Pledge and Earneſt of thine inheritance, *Rom.* 8. 26. *Pſal.* 73. 24. *Joh.* 14. 16. *Epheſ.* 1. 14. *Joh.* 14. 26. *Epheſ.* 4. 30. *Awake thou north wind, and come thou South, and blow upon my garden*, Cant. 4. 16. *Come thou Spirit of the moſt High; here is a houſe for thee, here is a temple for thee: Here do thou reſt for ever; dwell here, and reſt here: Lo, I give up the poſſeſſion to thee, full poſſeſſion. I ſend thee the keys of my heart, that all may be for thy uſe, that thou mayeſt put thy goods, thy grace into every room. I give up the uſe of all to thee, that every faculty, and every member may be thine inſtrument, to work righteouſneſs, and do the will of my Father which is in heaven.*

Secondly, *In all his eſſential Perfections.* Conſider how the Lord hath revealed himſelf to you in his word: Will you take him as ſuch a God? O ſinner, here's the bleſſed news that ever came to the ſons of men: The Lord will be thy God, *Gen.* 17. 7. *Rev.* 21. 3. If thou wilt but cloſe with him in his excellencies. Wilt thou have the merciful, the gracious, the ſin pardoning God to be thy God? Oh, yes (ſaith the ſinner) I am undone elſe. But he farther tells thee, I am the holy and ſin-hating God: If thou wilt be owned as one of my people, thou muſt be holy, 1 *Pet.* 1. 16. holy in heart, holy in life. Thou muſt put away all thine iniquities, be they never ſo

near

near, never ſo natural, never ſo neceſſary to the maintaining thy fleſhly intereſt. Unleſs thou wilt be at defiance with ſin, I cannot be thy God. Caſt out the leaven, put away the evil of thy doings, ceaſe to do evil, learn to do well, or elſe I can have nothing to do with thee, *Iſa.* 1. 16, 17, 18. Bring forth mine enemies, or there is no peace to be had with me. What doth thine heart anſwer? *Lord, I deſire to have thee as ſuch a God: I deſire to be holy, as thou art holy, to be made partaker of thy holineſs. I love thee, not only for thy goodneſs and mercy, but for thy holineſs and purity. I take thy holineſs for my happineſs: Oh, be to me a fountain of holineſs, ſet on me the ſtamp and impreſs of thy holineſs, I will thankfully part with all my ſins at thy command: My wilful ſins I do forthwith forſake; and for my infirmities that I cannot get rid of, tho' I would, I will ſtrive againſt them in the uſe of the means. I deteſt them, and will pray and war againſt them, and never let them have quiet reſt in my ſoul.* Beloved, whoſoever of you will thus accept of the Lord for his God, he ſhall have him.

Again, He tells you, I am the All-ſufficient God, *Gen.* 17. 1. Will you lay all at my feet, and give it up to my diſpoſe, and take me for your only portion? Will you own and honour mine All-ſufficiency? Will you take me as your happineſs and treaſure, your hope and bliſs? I am a Sun and a Shield, all in one: Will you have me for your All? *Gen.* 15. 1. *Pſal.* 84. 11. Now, What doſt thou ſay to this; Doth thy mouth water after the onions and fleſh-pots of *Egypt*? Art thou loth to exchange the earthly happineſs, for a part in God; and though thou wouldſt be glad to have God and the world too, yet canſt thou not think of having him, and nothing but him, but hadſt rather take up with the earth below, if God would but let thee keep it as long as thou wouldſt? This is a fearful ſign.

But now, if thou art willing to ſell all for the pearl of great price, *Matth.* 13. 46. If thine heart anſwer, *Lord, I deſire no other portion but thee. Take the corn, and the wine, and the oil whoſo will, ſo I may have the light of thy countenance. I pitch upon thee for my happineſs, I gladly venture my ſelf on thee, and truſt my ſelf with thee. I ſet my hopes in thee, I take up my reſt with thee, Let me hear thee ſay, I am thy God, thy Salvation, and I have enough, all I wiſh for. I will make no terms with thee, but for thy ſelf: Let me but have thee ſure, let me be able to make my claim, and ſee my title to thy ſelf, and for other things, I leave them to thee; give me more or leſs, any thing or nothing, I will be ſatisfied in my God.* Take him thus, and he is thine own.

Again, He tells you; I am the Soveraign Lord: if you will have me for your God, you muſt give me the ſupremacy, *Matth.* 6. 24. I will not be an underling: You muſt not make me a ſecond to ſin, or any worldly intereſt. If you will be my people, I muſt have the rule over you; you muſt not live at your own liſt. Will you come under my yoke? Will you bow to my government? Will you ſubmit to my diſcipline, to my word, to my rod? Sinner, What ſayeſt thou to this? *Lord I had rather be at thy command, than live at mine own liſt: I had rather have thy will to be done, than mine: I approve of, and conſent to thy laws, and account it my priviledge to lie under them. And though the fleſh rebel, and often break over bounds, I am reſolved to take no other Lord but thee, I willingly take the oath of thy ſupremacy, and acknowledge thee for my liege Soveraign, and reſolve all my days to pay the tribute of worſhip, obedience, and love, and ſervice to thee, and to live to thee, as the end of my life.* This is a right accepting of God.

To be ſhort, He tells you; I am the true and faithful God: If you will have me for your God, you muſt be content to truſt me, 2 *Tim.* 1. 12. *Prov.* 3. 5.

3. 5. Will you venter your ſelves upon my word, and depend on my faithfulneſs, and take my bond for your ſecurity? Will you be content to follow me, in poverty, and reproach, and affliction here, and to ſee much going out, and little coming in, and to tarry till the next world for your preferment? *Mat.* 9. 21. I deal much upon truſt: Will you be content to labour, and ſuffer, and to tarry for your returns till the reſurrection of the juſt? *Luke* 14. 14. The womb of my promiſe will not preſently bring forth: Will you have the patience to wait? *Heb.* 10. 36. Now, beloved; What ſay you to this; Will you have this God for your God? Will you be content to live by faith, and truſt him for an unſeen happineſs, an unſeen heaven, an unſeen glory? Do your hearts anſwer, *Lord, we will venture our ſelves upon thee, we commit our ſelves to thee, we roll upon thee, we know whom we have truſted, we are willing to take thy word, we will prefer thy promiſes before our own poſſeſſions, and the hopes of heaven before all the enjoyments of the earth; we will wait thy leiſure: What thou wilt here, ſo that we may have but thy faithful promiſe for heaven hereafter?* If you can in truth, and upon deliberation, thus accept of God, he will be yours. Thus there muſt be, in a right converſion to God, a cloſing with him ſuitable to his excellencies. But when men cloſe with his mercy, but yet love ſin, hating holineſs and purity; or will take him for their Benefactor, but not for their Soveraign; or for their Patron, but not for their Portion; this is no thorow, and no ſound converſion.

Direct. VII. *Accept of the Lord Jeſus in all his offices, with all his inconveniences, as thine.* Upon theſe terms Chriſt may be had. Sinner, Thou haſt undone thy ſelf and art plunged into the ditch of moſt deplorable miſery, out of which thou art never able o climb up: But Jeſus Chriſt is able and ready to help

thee, and he freely tenders himſelf to thee, *Heb.* 7. 25. *Joh.* 3. 36. Be thy ſins never ſo many, never ſo great, of never ſo long continuance, yet thou ſhalt be moſt certainly pardoned and ſaved, if thou doſt not wretchedly neglect the offer that in the name of God is here made unto thee. The Lord Jeſus calleth unto thee, to look unto him and be ſaved, *Iſa.* 45. 22. to come unto him, and he will in no wiſe caſt thee out, *Joh.* 6. 37. Yea, he is a ſuitor to thee, and beſeecheth thee to be reconciled, 2 *Cor.* 5. 20. He cryeth in the ſtreets, he knocketh at thy door, he wooeth thee to accept of him, and live with him, *Prov.* 1. 20. *Rev.* 2. 30. If thou dieſt, 'tis becauſe thou wouldſt not come to him for life, *Joh.* 5. 40. Now accept of an offered Chriſt, and thou art made for ever: Now give up thy conſent to him, and the match is made, all the world cannot hinder it. Do not ſtand off becauſe of thine unworthineſs. Man, I tell thee, nothing in all the world can undo thee, but thine unwillingneſs. Speak, man: Art thou willing of the match? Wilt thou have Chriſt in all his relations to be thine; thy King, thy Prieſt, thy Prophet; Wilt thou have him with all his inconveniencies? Take not Chriſt hand over head, but ſit down firſt, and count the coſt. Wilt thou lay all at his feet! Wilt thou be content to run all hazards with him? Wilt thou take thy lot with him, fall where it will? Wilt thou deny thy ſelf, take up thy croſs, and follow him? Art thou deliberately, underſtandingly, freely, fixedly, determined to cleave to him in all times, and conditions? If ſo, my ſoul for thine, thou ſhalt never periſh, *Joh.* 3. 16. but art paſſed from death to life. Here lies the main point of thy ſalvation, that thou be found in thy covenant-cloſure with Jeſus Chriſt; and therefore, if thou love thy ſelf, ſee that thou be faithful to God and thy ſoul here.

Direct. VIII. *Reſign up all thy powers and faculties, and thy whole intereſt, to be his. They gave their own ſelves unto the Lord*, 2 Cor. 8. 5. *Preſent your bodies as a living ſacrifice*, Rom. 12. 1. The Lord ſeeks not yours, but you: Reſign therefore thy body, with all its members, to him; and thy ſoul, with all its powers; that he may be glorified in thy body, and in thy ſpirit, which are his, 1 *Cor.* 6. 20. In a right cloſure with Chriſt, all the faculties give up to him. The judgment ſubſcribes, *Lord, thou art worthy of all acceptation, chief of ten thouſand: Happy is the man that findeth thee. All the things that are to be deſired, are not to be compared with thee*, Prov. 3. 13, 14, 15. The underſtanding lays aſide its corrupt reaſonings and cavils, and its prejudices againſt Chriſt, and his ways. It is now paſt queſtioning and diſputing, and caſts it for Chriſt, againſt all the world. It concludes, 'tis good to be here; and ſees ſuch a treaſure in this field, ſuch a value in this pearl, as is worth all; *Matth.* 13. 44. *Oh, here is the richeſt bargain that ever I made, here is the richeſt prize that ever man was offered, here is the ſovereigneſt remedy that ever mercy prepared; he is worthy of my eſteem, worthy of my choice, worthy of my love, worthy to be embraced, adored, admired for evermore*, Rev. 5. 12. *I approve of his articles, his terms are righteous and reaſonable, full of equity and mercy.* Again, The will reſigns: It ſtands no longer wavering, nor waſhing and woulding, but is peremptorily determined: *Lord, thy love hath overcome me, thou haſt won me, and thou ſhalt have me: Come in, Lord; to thee I freely open, I conſent to be ſaved in thine own way, thou ſhalt have any thing, thou ſhalt have all, let me have but thee.* The memory gives up to Chriſt: *Lord, here is a ſtore-houſe for thee: Out with this traſh lay in the treaſure: Let me be a granary, a repoſitory of thy truth; thy promiſes, thy providences.* The conſcience comes in: *Lord, I will ever ſide with thee, I will be thy faithful*

ful Regiſter, I will warn when the ſinner is tempted, and ſmite when thou art offended. I will witneſs for thee, and judge for thee, and guide into thy ways, and will never let ſin have quiet in this ſoul. The affections alſo come into Chriſt: *Oh,* ſaith love, *I am ſick of thee, Oh,* ſaith deſire, *now I have my longing: Here is the ſatisfaction I ſought for; here is the deſire of nations; here is bread for me, and balm for me, all that* I *want.* Fear bows the knee with awe and veneration: *Welcome, Lord; to thee will I pay my homage, thy word and thy rod ſhall command my motions, thee will I reverence and adore, before thee will I fall down and worſhip.* Grief likewiſe puts in: *Lord, thy diſpleaſure, and thy diſhonour thy peoples calamities, and mine own iniquities, ſhall be that that ſhall ſet me abroach: I will mourn when thou art offended, I will weep when thy cauſe is wounded.* Anger likewiſe comes in for Chriſt: *Lord, nothing ſo enrages me, as my folly againſt thee; that I ſhould be ſo befooled, and bewitched, as to hearken to the flatteries of ſin, and temptations of Satan, againſt thee.* Hatred too will ſide with Chriſt: *I proteſt mortal enmity with thine enemies, that I will never be friends with thy foes; I vow an immortal quarrel with every ſin, I will give no quarter, I will make no peace.* Thus let all thy powers give up to Jeſus Chriſt.

Again, thou muſt give up thy whole intereſt to him: If there be any thing that thou keepeſt back from Chriſt, it will be thine undoing, *Luke* 14. 33. Unleſs thou wilt forſake all (in preparation and reſolution of thy heart) thou canſt not be his diſciple. Thou muſt hate father and mother, yea, and thine own life alſo in compariſon of him, and as far as it ſtands in competition with him, *Matth.* 10. 37. *Luke* 14. 26, 27, *&c.* In a word, Thou muſt give him thy ſelf, and all that thou haſt, without reſervation; or elſe thou canſt have no part in him.

Direct. IX. *Make choice of the laws of Chriſt, as the*

rule

rule of thy words, thoughts and actions, Pſal. 119. 30. This is the true convert's choice. But here remember theſe three rules. 1. *You muſt chuſe them all.* There is no coming to heaven by a partial obedience; Read *Pſal.* 119. 6, 128, 160. *Ezek.* 18. 21. None may think it enough to take up with the cheap and eaſie part of Religion, and let alone the duties that are coſtly, and ſelf-denying, and great upon the intereſt of the fleſh: You muſt take all, or none. A ſincere convert, though he makes moſt conſcience of the greateſt ſins, and weightieſt duties, yet he makes true conſcience of little ſins and of all duties, *Pſal.* 119. 6, 113. *Matth.* 23. 23. 2. *For all times:* For proſperity, and for adverſity; whether it rain or ſhine. A true convert is reſolved in his way, he will ſtand to his choice, and will not ſet his back to the wind, and be of the religion of the times. *I have ſtuck to thy teſtimonies, I have inclined my heart to perform thy ſtatutes alway, even to the end. Thy teſtimonies have I taken, as an heritage for ever*, Pſal. 119. 31, 111, 117, 44, 93. *I will have reſpect unto thy ſtatutes continually. This muſt not be done hand over head, but deliberately, and underſtandingly.* That diſobedient Son ſaid, *I go, ſir; but he went not*, Matth. 24. 30. How fairly did they promiſe: *All that the Lord our God ſhall ſpeak unto thee, we will do it:* And 'tis like they ſpake as they meant; but when it came to trial, it was found that there was not ſuch a heart in them, as to do what they had promiſed, *Deut.* 5. 27, 29. If you would be ſincere in cloſing with the laws and ways of Chriſt, Firſt, *Study the meaning, and latitude, and compaſs of them:* Remember that they are very ſpiritual, they reach the very thoughts and inclinations of the heart; ſo that if you will walk by this rule, your very thoughts, and inward motions muſt be under government. Again, That they are very ſtrict, and ſelf-denying, quite

quite contrary to the grain of your natural inclinations, *Matth.*16. 24. You muſt take the ſtrait gate, the narrow way, and be content to have the fleſh curbed from the liberty it deſires, *Matth.* 7. 14. In a word, that they are very large: *For thy commandments is exceeding broad*, Pſal. 119. 96. Secondly, *Reſt not in generals*, (for there is much deceit in that,) *but bring down thy heart to the particular commands of Chriſt.* Thoſe Jews in the prophet ſeemed as well reſolved as any in the world, and called God to witneſs, that they meant as they ſaid: But they ſtuck in generals. When God's command croſſeth their inclination, they will not obey, *Jer.* 42. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. compared with *chap.* 43. *v.* 2. Take the Aſſemblies larger Catechiſm, and ſee their excellent and moſt compendious expoſition of the Commandements, and put thy heart to it. Art thou reſolved, in the ſtrength of Chriſt, to ſet upon the conſcientious practice of every duty that thou findeſt to be there required of thee, and to ſet againſt every ſin that thou findeſt there forbidden? This is the way to be found in God's ſtatutes, that thou mayeſt never be aſhamed, *Pſal.* 119. 80. Thirdly, *obſerve the ſpecial duties that thy heart is moſt againſt, and the ſpecial ſins that 'tis moſt inclined unto; and ſee whether it be truly reſolved to perform the one, and forego the other.* What ſayeſt thou to thy boſom-ſin, thy gainful ſin? What ſayeſt to coſtly and hazardous, and fleſh diſpleaſing duties? If thou halteſt here, and doſt not reſolve, by the grace of God, to croſs thy fleſh, and put to it, thou art unſound, *Pſal.* 18. 23. and 119. 6.

Direct. X. *Let all this be compleated in a ſolemn covenant between God and thy ſoul*, Pſal. 119. 106. Neh. 10. 29. For thy better help therein, take theſe few directions.

Firſt, Set apart ſome time, more than once, to be ſpent in ſecret before the Lord.

1. *In*

1. *In ſeeking earneſtly his ſpecial aſſiſtance, and gracious acceptance of thee.*

2. *In conſidering diſtinctly all the terms or conditions of the Covenant, expreſſed in the form hereafter propoſed.*

3. *In ſearching thine heart, whether thou art ſincerely willing to forſake all thy ſins, and to reſign up thy ſelf body and ſoul, unto God, and his ſervice; to ſerve him in holineſs and righteouſneſs, all the days of thy life.*

Secondly, Compoſe thy ſpirit into the moſt ſerious frame poſſible, ſuitable to a tranſaction of ſo high importance.

Thirdly, Lay hold on the Covenant of God, and rely upon his promiſe of giving grace and ſtrength whereby thou mayeſt be enabled to perform thy promiſe. Truſt not to thine own ſtrength, to the ſtrength of thine own reſolutions, but take hold on his ſtrength.

Fourthly, Reſolve to be faithful; having engaged thine heart, opened thy mouth, and ſubſcribed with thy hand unto the Lord, reſolve in his ſtrength never to go back.

Laſtly, Being thus prepared, on ſome convenient time ſet apart for the purpoſe, ſet upon the work; and in the moſt ſolemn manner poſſible, as if the Lord were viſibly preſent before thine eyes, fall down on thy knees, and ſpreading forth thine hands toward heaven, open thine heart to the Lord in theſe, or the like words.

O Moſt dreadful God! For the paſſion of thy Son, I beſeech thee, accept of thy poor prodigal, now proſtrating himſelf at thy door: I have fallen from thee by mine iniquity, and am by nature a ſon of death, and a thouſand fold more the child of hell, by my wicked practice; but of thine infinite grace, thou haſt promiſed grace to me in Chriſt

The terms of our Communion are either from which, or to which.

Chriſt, if I will but turn to thee with all my heart: Therefore upon the call of thy Goſpel, I am now come in, and, throwing down my weapons, ſubmit my ſelf to thy mercy.

The terms from which we muſt turn: Sin, Satan, the World, and our own Righteouſneſs, which muſt be thus renounced.

And becauſe thou requireſt, as the condition of my peace with thee, that I ſhould put away mine idols, and be at defiance with all thine enemies, which I acknowledge, I have wickedly ſided with, againſt thee; I here from the bottom of my heart renounce them all, firmly covenanting with thee, not to allow my ſelf in any known ſin, but conſcientiouſly to uſe all the means that I know thou haſt preſcribed, for the death and utter deſtruction of all my corruptions. And whereas I have formerly inordinately and idolatrouſly let out my affections upon the world, I do here reſign up my heart to thee that madeſt it, humbly proteſting before thy glorious Majeſty, that it is the firm reſolution of my heart; and that I do unfeignedly deſire grace from thee, that when thou ſhalt call me hereunto, I may practice this my reſolution, through thy aſſiſtance, to forſake all that is dear unto me in this world, rather then to turn from thee, to the ways of ſin; and that I will watch againſt all its temptations, whether of proſperity, or adverſity, leſt they ſhould withdraw my heart from thee; beſeeching thee alſo to help me againſt the temptations of Satan, to whoſe wicked ſuggeſtions I reſolve, by thy grace, never to yield my ſelf a ſervant. And becauſe my own righteouſneſs is but menſtruous rags, I renounce all confidence therein, and acknowledge that I am of my ſelf a hopeleſs, helpleſs,

helpless, undone creature, without righteousness or strength.

And for as much as thou hast, of thy bottomless mercy, offered most graciously to me wretched sinner, to be again my God, through Christ, if I would accept of thee; I call heaven and earth to record this day, that I do here solemnly avouch thee for the Lord my God; and with all possible veneration, bowing the neck of my soul under the feet of thy most sacred Majesty, I do here take thee, Lord *Jehovah*, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for my portion, and chief good; and to give up my self, body and soul for thy servant, promising and vowing to serve thee in holiness and righteousness, all the days of my life.

The terms to which we must turn, are either ultimate, or mediate.

The ultimate is God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who must be thus accepted.

And since thou hast appointed the Lord Jesus Christ the only means of coming unto thee, I do here, upon the bended knees of my soul, accept of him, as the only new and living way, by which sinners may have access to thee; and do hereby solemnly join my self in marriage covenant to him.

The mediate terms are either principal, or less principal.

The principal is Christ the Mediator, who must thus be embrac'd.

O blessed Jesus, I come to thee hungry, and hardly bestead, poor, and wretched, and miserable, and blind, and naked; a most loathsome polluted wretch; a guilty, condemned malefactor, unworthy for ever to wash the feet of the servants of my Lord, much more to be solemnly married to the King of glory: But sith such is thine unparallell'd love, I do here withal my power accept thee, and do take thee for my Head and Husband; for better,

ter, for worse? for richer, for poorer? for all times and conditions; to love, honour and obey thee, before all others; and this to the death. I embrace thee in all thy offices: I renounce mine own worthiness, and do here avow thee to be the Lord my Righteousness: I renounce mine own wisdom, and do here take thee for mine only guide: I renounce mine own will, and take thy will for my law.

And since thou hast told me that I must suffer if I will reign, I do here covenant with thee to take my lot, as it falls, with thee; and, by thy grace assisting, to run all hazards with thee; verily supposing that neither life nor death shall part between thee and me.

The least principal are the laws of Christ, which must be thus observed.

And because thou hast been pleased to give me thy holy laws as the rule of my life, and the way in which I should walk to thy Kingdom, I do here willingly put my neck under thy yoake, and set my shoulder to thy burden; and subscribing to all thy Laws, as holy, just and good, I solemnly take them as the rule of my words, thoughts and actions; promising that though my flesh contradict and rebel, yet I will endeavour to order and govern my whole life according to thy direction, and will not allow my self in the neglect of any thing that I know to be my duty.

Only because, through the frailty of my flesh, I am subject to many failings, I am bold humbly to protest, That unallowed miscarriages, contrary to the setled bent and resolution of my heart, shall not make void this covenant; for so thou hast said.

Now, Almighty God, searcher of hearts, thou knowest that I make this covenant with thee this day, without any known guile or reservation; beseeching

seeching thee, that if thou espiest any flaw or falshood therein, thou wouldst discover it to me, and help me to do it aright.

And now, Glory be to thee, O God the Father, whom I shall be bold from this day forward, to look upon as my God and Father, that ever thou shouldst find out such a way for the recovery of undone sinners. Glory be to thee, O God the Son who hast loved me, and washed me from my sins in thine own blood, and art now become my Saviour and Redeemer. Glory be to thee, O God the Holy Ghost, who by the finger of thine Almighty Power, hast turned about my heart from sin to God.

O dreadful *Jehovah*, the Lord God omnipotent, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! Thou art now become my Covenant friend, and I, through thine infinite grace, am become thy Covenant servant, *Amen*, So be it. And the Covenant which I have made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven.

The AUTHOR's Advice.

THis Covenant I advise you to make, not only in heart, but in word; not only in word, but in writing; and that you would, with all possible reverence, spread the writing before the Lord, as if you would present it to him as your Act and deed: And when you have done this, set your hand to it; keep it as a memorial of the solemn transactions that have passed between God and you, that you may have recourse to it in doubts and temptations.

Direct. XI. *Take heed of delaying thy conversion, and set upon a speedy and present turning. I made hast and delayed not*, Psal. 119. 60. Remember, and tremble at the sad instance of the foolish Virgins, that came not till the door of mercy was shut, *Matth.* 25. And of a convinced *Felix*, that put off *Paul* to another season; and we never find that he had such a season more,

more, *Acts* 24. 25. Oh, come in while it is called to day, leſt thou ſhouldſt be hardened through the deceitfulneſs of ſin; leſt the day of grace ſhould be over, and the things that belong to thy peace ſhould be hid from thine eyes. Now mercy is wooing of thee? Now Chriſt is waiting to be gracious to thee, and the ſpirit of God is ſtriving with thee: Now Miniſters are calling; now Conſcience is ſtirring; now the market is open, and oil may be had, thou haſt opportunity for the buying: Now Chriſt is to be had for the taking. Oh! Strike in with the offers of grace: Oh! Now, or never. If thou make light of this offer, God may ſwear in his wrath, thou ſhalt never taſte of his Supper, *Luke* 14. 24.

Direct. XII. *Attend conſcientiouſly upon the word, as the means appointed for thy converſion,* Jam. 1. 18, 19. 1 Cor. 4. 15. Attend, I ſay, not cuſtomarily, but conſcientiouſly; with this deſire, deſign, hope and expectation, that thou mayeſt be converted by it. To every Sermon thou heareſt, come with this thought; *Oh, I hope God will now come in: I hope this day may be the time, this may be the man by whom God will bring me home.* When thou art coming to the ordinances, lift up thine heart thus to God: *Lord, let this be the Sabbath, let this be the Seaſon, wherein I may receive renewing grace. Oh, let it be ſaid, that to day ſuch a one was born unto thee.*

Object. Thou wilt ſay, I have been long a hearer of the word, and yet it hath not been effectual to my converſion. *Anſw.* Yea, but thou haſt not attended upon it in this manner, as a means of thy converſion, nor with this deſign; nor praying for, and expecting of this happy effect of it.

Direct. XIII. *Strike in with the Spirit, when he begins to work upon thy heart.* When he works convictions, Oh do not ſtifle them, but joyn in with him; and beg the Lord to carry on convictions, to converſion.

version. Quench not the Spirit, do not out-strive him, do not resist him. Beware of putting out convictions by evil company, or worldly busines. When thou findest any troubles for sin, and fears about thy eternal state, beg of God that they may never leave thee, till they have wrought off thy heart throughly from sin, and wrought it over to Jesus Christ. Say to him, *Strike home Lord; leave not the work in the midst. If thou seest that I am not yet wounded enough, that I am not troubled enough, wound me yet deeper, Lord: Oh, go to the bottom of my corruption, let out the life-blood of my sins.* Thus yield up thy self to the workings of the Spirit, and hoise thy sails to his gusts.

Direct. XIV. *Set upon the constant and diligent use of serious and fervent prayer.* He that neglects prayer, is a profane and unsanctified sinner, *Job* 15. 4. He that is not constant in prayer, is but an hypocrite, *Job* 27. 10. (unless the omission be contrary to his ordinary course, under the force of some instant temptation.) This is one of the first things conversion appears in, that it sets men on praying, *Acts* 9. 11. Therefore set to this duty: Let never a day pass over thee, wherein thou hast not, morning and evening, set apart some time for set and solemn prayer in secret. Call thy family also together daily and duly, to worship God with thee. Woe be unto thee, if thine be found amongst the families that call not on God's name, *Jer.* 10. 25. But cold and lifeless devotions will not reach half way to heaven: Be fervent, and importunate; importunity will carry it; but without violence, the Kingdom of heaven will not be taken, *Matth.* 11. 12. Thou must strive to enter, *Luke* 13. 24. and wrestle with tears and supplications as *Jacob*, if thou meanest to carry the blessing, *Gen.* 32. 24. compared with *Hos.* 12. 4. Thou art undone for ever without grace, and therefore

fore thou must put to it, and resolve to take no denial. That man that is fixed in this resolution: *Well, I must have grace; and I will never give over, till I have grace; and I will never leave seeking, and waiting, and striving with God, and mine own heart, till he do renew me by the power of his grace*; this man is in the likeliest way to win grace.

Object. But God heareth not sinners, their Prayer is an abomination.

Answ. Distinguish between sinners. 1. There are *Resolved sinners*: Their prayers God abhors. 2. *Returning sinners*: These God will come forth to, and meet with mercy, though yet a-far off, *Luke* 15. 20. Though the prayers of the unsanctified cannot have full acceptance, yet God hath done much at the request of such; as at *Ahab*'s humiliation, and *Nineveh*'s fast, 1 *Kings* 21. 26. *Jonah* 3. 8, 9, 10. Surely thou mayest go as far as these, though thou hast no grace: And how dost thou know but thou mayest speed in thy suit, as they did in theirs? Yea, Is he not far more likely to grant thee, than them; since thou askest in the name of Christ, and that not for temporal blessings, as they, but for things much more pleasing to him; *viz.* for *Christ, grace, pardon, that thou mayest be justified, sanctified, renewed, and fitted to serve him*? Turn to these soul-encouraging Scriptures, *Prov.* 2. 1. *to* 6. *Luke* 11. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. *Prov.* 8. 34, 35.

Is it not good comfort, that he calleth thee? *Mar.* 10. 49. Doth he set thee on the use of means, and dost thou think he will mock thee? Doubtless, he will not fail thee, If thou be not wanting to thy self. Oh, pray, and faint not, *Luke* 18. 1. A person of great quality having offended the Duke of *Buckingham*, the King's great Favourite, being admitted into his presence, after long waiting, prostrates himself at his feet, saying, *I am resolved never to rise more,*

till

till I have obtained your Grace's favour. With which carriage he did overcome him. With ſuch a reſolution do thou throw thy ſelf at the feet of God: 'Tis for thy life, and therefore follow him, and give not over: Reſolve thou wilt not be put off with bones, with common mercies. What though God do not preſently open to thee? Is not grace worth the waiting for? Knock, and wait; and no doubt but, ſooner or later, mercy will come.

And this know, That thou haſt the very ſame encouragement to ſeek and wait, that the Saints now in glory once had; for they were once in thy very caſe. And have they ſped ſo well, and wilt thou not go to the ſame door, and wait upon God in the ſame courſe?

Direct. XV. *Forſake thy evil company*, Prov. 9. 6. *and forbear the occaſions of ſin*, Prov. 23. 31. Thou wilt never be turned from ſin, till thou wilt decline and forego the temptations of ſin.

I never expect thy converſion from ſin, unleſs thou art brought to ſome ſelf denial, as to fly the occaſions. If thou wilt be nibling at the bait, and playing on the brink, and tampering and medling with the ſnare, thy ſoul will ſurely be taken. Where God doth expoſe men in his providence, unavoidably to temptation, and the occaſions are ſuch as we cannot remove, we may expect ſpecial aſſiſtance in the uſe of his means: But when we tempt God, by running into danger, he will not engage to ſupport us when we are tempted. And of all temptations, one of the moſt fatal and pernicious, is evil company. Oh, What hopeful beginnings have theſe often ſtifled! Oh, the ſouls, the eſtates, the families, the towns, that theſe have ruined! How many a poor ſinner hath been enlightned, and convinced, and hath been juſt ready to give the Devil the ſlip, and hath even eſcaped the ſnare,

and

and yet wicked company have pull'd him back at laſt, and made him ſeven fold more the child of hell. In one word, I have no hopes of thee, except thou wilt ſhake off thy evil company. Chriſt ſpeaketh to thee, as to them in another caſe; *If thou ſeek me, then let theſe go their way*, Joh. 18. 8. Thy life lies upon it: Forſake theſe, or elſe thou canſt not live, *Prov.* 9. 6. Wilt thou be worſe than the beaſt to run on when thou ſeeſt the Lord with a drawn ſword in the way? *Numb.* 22. 33. Let this ſentence be written in Capitals upon thy Conſcience, A COMPANION OF FOOLS SHALL BE DESTROYED, *Prov.* 13. 20. The Lord hath ſpoken it, and who ſhall reverſe it? And wilt thou run upon deſtruction, when God himſelf doth forewarn thee? If God do ever change thy heart, it will appear in the change of thy company. Oh, fear and fly this gulf, by which ſo many thouſand ſouls have been ſwallowed into perdition. It will be hard for thee, indeed, to make thine eſcape: Thy companions will be mocking thee out of thy Religion, and will ſtudy to fill thee with prejudices againſt ſtrictneſs, as ridiculous and comfortleſs. They will be flattering thee, and alluring thee; but remember the warnings of the Holy Ghoſt, *My Son, if ſinners entice thee, conſent thou not. If thy ſay Come with us, caſt in thy lot among us; walk not thou in the way with them, refrain thy foot from their path; avoid it paſs not by it, turn from it, and paſs away: For the way of the wicked is as darkneſs, they know not at what they ſtumble. They lay wait for their own blood; they lurk privily for their own lives*, Prov. 1. 10, to 18. and 4. 14. to 19. My ſoul is moved within me, to ſee how many of my hearers are like to periſh, both they and their houſes, by this wretched miſchief, even the haunting of ſuch places, and company, whereby they are drawn into ſin. Once more I admoniſh you

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as *Moſes* did *Iſrael*, *Numb.* 16. 26. *And he ſpake unto the congregation, ſaying, Depart, I pray you, from the tents of theſe wicked men.* Oh! Flee them as you would thoſe that had the plague-ſores running in their foreheads. Theſe are the Devil's Panders, and Decoys; and if thou doſt not make thine eſcape, they will toll thee into perdition, and will prove thine eternal ruin.

Direct. XVI. Laſtly, *Set apart a day to humble thy ſoul in ſecret, by faſting and prayer, to work the ſenſe of thy ſins and miſeries upon thy heart.* Read over the *Aſſembly's Expoſition of the Commandments*, and write down the duties omitted, and ſins committed by thee againſt every Commandment, and ſo make a catalogue of thy ſins, and with ſhame and ſorrow ſpread them before the Lord. And if thy heart be truly willing to the terms, joyn thy ſelf ſolemnly to the Lord in that Covenant ſet down in the 9th Direction, and the Lord grant thee mercy in his ſight.

Thus I have told thee, what thou muſt do to be ſaved. Wilt thou not now obey the voice of the Lord? Wilt thou ariſe, and ſet to thy work? O man, What anſwer wilt thou make, what excuſe wilt thou have, if thou ſhouldſt periſh at laſt through very wilfulneſs, when thou haſt known the way of life? I do not fear thy miſcarrying, if thine own idleneſs do not at laſt undo thee, in neglecting the uſe of the means that are ſo plainly here preſcribed. Rouze up O ſluggard, and ply thy work: Be doing, and the Lord will be with thee.

A ſhort Soliloquy for an Unregenerate Sinner.

AH wretched man that I am! What a condition have I brought my ſelf into by ſin? Oh! I ſee my heart hath but deceived me all this while,

in flattering me, that my condition was good, I see, I see, I am but a lost and undone man, for ever undone, unless the Lord help me out of this condition. My sins! My sins! Lord, what an unclean, polluted wretch am I! More loathsome and odious to thee, than the most hateful venom, or noisome carcase can be to me. Oh, what a hell of sin is in this heart of mine, which I have flattered my self to be a good heart! Lord, how universally am I corrupted, in all my parts, powers, performances! All the imaginations of the thoughts of my heart are only evil continually. I am under an inability to, averseness from, and enmity against any thing that is good; and am prone to all that is evil. My heart is a very sink of all sin: And oh the innumerable hosts and swarms of sinful thoughts, words, and actions, that have flown from thence! Oh the load of guilt that is on my soul! *My head is full, my heart full, my mind, and my members, they are full of sin.* O my sins! How do they stare upon me! How do they witness against me! Woe is me, my creditors are upon me, every Commandment taketh hold upon me, for more than ten thousand talents, yea, ten thousand times ten thousand. How endless then is the sum of all my debts! If this whole world were filled up from earth to heaven with paper, and all this paper written over, within and without, by Arithmeticans; yet when all were cast up together it would come unconceivably short of what I owe to the least of God's Commandments. Woe unto me; for my debts are infinite, and my sins are increased; they are wrongs to an infinite Majesty. And if he that committeth treason against a silke mortal is worthy to be racked, drawn and quartered; what have I deserved, that have so often lifted up my hand against heaven, and have struck at the crown and dignity of the Almighty?

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O my ſins, my ſins! Behold a troop cometh! Multitudes, multitudes! There is no number of their Armies. Innumerable evils have compaſſed me about: Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me; they have ſet themſelves in aray againſt me. Oh! It were better to have all the regiments of hell come againſt me, than to have my ſins to fall upon me, to the ſpoiling of my ſoul. Lord, how am I ſurrounded? How many are they that riſe up againſt me? They have beſet me behind and before: They ſwarm within me, and without me: They have poſſeſſed all my powers, and have fortified mine unhappy ſoul, as a Gariſon, which this brood of hell doth man, and maintain againſt the God that made me.

And they are as mighty, as they are many. The ſands are many, but then they are not great: The mountains great, but then they are not many: But woe is me! My ſins are as many as the ſands, and as mighty as the mountains; their weight is greater than their number. It were better that the rocks and the mountains ſhould fall upon me, than the cruſhing and inſupportable load of my own ſins. Lord, I am heavy loaden; let mercy help, or I am gone. Unload me of this heavy guilt, this ſinking load; or I am cruſhed without hope, and muſt be preſſed down to hell. If my grief were throughly weighed, and my ſins layed in the balances together, they would be heavier than the ſand of the ſea; therefore my words are ſwallowed up: They would weigh down all the rocks, and the hills, and turn the balance againſt all the Iſles of the earth. O Lord, thou knoweſt my manifold tranſgreſſions, and my mighty ſins.

Ah, my ſoul! Alas, my glory! Whither art thou humbled? Once the glory of the creation, and the image of God: Now a lump of filthineſs,

a coffin of rottenneſs, repleniſhed with ſtench and loathſomneſs. Oh, What work hath ſin made with thee! Thou ſhalt be termed *Forſaken*, and all the rooms of thy faculties *Deſolate*, and the name that thou ſhalt be called by it is *Ichabod*, or *Where is the glory*? How art thou come down mightily? My beauty is turned into deformity, and my glory into ſhame. Lord, What a loathſome Leper am I? The ulcerous bodies of *Job* or *Lazarus* were not more offenſive to the eyes and noſtrils of men, than I muſt needs be to the moſt holy God, whoſe eyes cannot behold iniquity.

And what miſery have my ſins brought upon me? Lord, what a caſe am I in? Sold under ſin, caſt out of God's favour, accurſed from the Lord, curſed in my body, curſed in my ſoul, curſed in my name, in my eſtate, my relations, and all that I have. My ſins are unpardoned, and my ſoul within a ſtep of death. Alas! What ſhall I do; Whither ſhall I go? Which way ſhall I look? God is frowning on me from above; hell gaping for me beneath; conſcience ſmiting me within; temptations and dangers ſurrounding me without. Oh, whither ſhall I flee? What place can hide me from Omniſciency? What power can ſecure me from Omnipotency?

What meaneſt thou, O my ſoul, to go on thus? Art thou in league with hell? Haſt thou made a covenant with death? Art thou in love with thy miſery? Is it good for thee to be here? Alas, What ſhall I do? Shall I go on in my ſinful ways? Why then certain damnation will be mine end: And ſhall I be ſo beſotted, and be madded, as to go and ſell my ſoul to the flames for a little Ale, and a little eaſe; for a little pleaſure, or gain, or content to my fleſh? Shall I linger any longer in this wretched eſtate? No, if I tarry here, I ſhall die. What then? Is there

no

no help, no hope? None, except I turn. Why, but is there any remedy for such woful misery? Any mercy after such provoking iniquity? Yes, as sure as God's oath is true, I shall have pardon and mercy yet, if presently, unfeignedly, and unreservedly I turn by Christ to him.

Why then I thank thee upon the bended knees of my soul, O most merciful *Jehovah*, that thy patience hath waited upon me hitherto: For hadst thou took me away in this estate, I had perished for ever. And now I adore thy grace, and accept the offers of thy mercy: I renounce all my sins, and resolve, by thy grace, to set my self against them, and to follow thee, in holiness and righteousness, all the days of my life.

Who am I Lord, that I should make any claim unto thee, or have any part or portion in thee, who am not worthy to lick up the dust of thy feet? Yet since thou holdst forth the golden Scepter, I am bold to come and touch. To despair, would be to disparage thy mercy; and to stand off when thou biddest me come, would be at once to undo my self, and rebel against thee, under the pretence of humility. Therefore I bow my soul to thee, and with all possible thankfulness, accept thee as mine, and give up my self to thee as thine. Thou shalt be Soveraign over me, my King, and my God: Thou shalt be in the throne, and all my powers shall bow to thee, they shall come and worship before thy feet: Thou shalt be my portion, O Lord, and I will rest in thee.

Thou callest for my heart: Oh that it were any way fit for thine acceptance! I am unworthy, O Lord, everlastingly unworthy to be thine: But since thou wilt have it so; I freely give up my heart to thee; take it, it is thine: Oh that it were better! But, Lord, I put it into thine hand, who alone canst

mend it: Mould it after thine own heart; make it as thou wouldſt have it, holy, humble, heavenly, ſoft, tender, flexible; and write thy law upon it.

Come, Lord Jeſus; come quickly; Enter in triumphantly: Take me up to thee for ever. I give up to thee, I come to thee, as the only way to the Father, as the only Mediator, the means ordained to bring me to God. I have deſtroyed my ſelf, but in thee is my help: Save, Lord; or elſe I periſh: I come to thee with the rope about my neck; I am worthy to die, and to be damned. Never was the hire more due to the ſervant, never was peny more due to the labourer, than death and hell, my juſt wages, is due to me for my ſins: But I fly to thy merits, I truſt alone to the value and virtue of thy ſacrifice, and prevalency of thy interceſſion: I ſubmit to thy teaching, I make choice of thy government. Stand open, ye everlaſting doors, that the King of glory may come in.

O thou ſpirit of the Moſt High, the Comforter and Sanctifyer of thy choſen; come in with all thy glorious train, all thy courtly attendants, thy fruits, and graces: Let me be thine inhabitation. I can give thee but what is thine own already; but here, with the poor widow, I caſt my two mites, my ſoul and my body, into thy treaſury; fully reſigning them up to thee, to be ſanctified by thee, to be ſervants to thee: They ſhall be thy patients, cure thou their malady; they ſhall be thy agents, govern thou their motions. Too long have I ſerved the world, too long have I hearkned to Satan; but now I renounce them all, and will be ruled by thy dictates and directions, and guided by thy counſel.

O bleſſed Trinity! O glorious Unity! I deliver up my ſelf to thee; receive me; write thy name, O Lord, upon me, and upon all that I have, as thy proper goods: Set thy mark upon me, upon

every

every member of my body, and every faculty of my ſoul. I have choſen thy precepts, thy law will I lay before me: This ſhall be the copy which I will keep in my eye, and ſtudy to write after. According to this rule do I reſolve, by thy grace, to walk; after this law ſhall my whole man be governed; and though I cannot perfectly keep one of thy Commandments, yet I will allow my ſelf in the breach of none. I know my fleſh will hang back, But I reſolve, in the power of thy grace, to cleave to thee, and thy holy ways, whatever it coſt me. I am ſure I cannot come off a looſer by thee, therefore I will be content with reproach, and difficulties, and hardſhips here; and will deny my ſelf and take up my croſs, and follow thee. Lord Jeſus, thy yoake is eaſie, thy croſs is welcome, as it is the way to thee. I lay aſide all hopes of worldly happineſs, I will be content to tarry till I come to thee: Let me be poor and low, little and deſpiſed here, ſo I may be but admitted to live and reign with thee hereafter. Lord, thou haſt my heart and hand to this agreement: Be it as the laws of the *Medes* and *Perſians*, never to be reverſed: To this I will ſtand, in this reſolution, by grace, I will live and die. I have ſworn, and will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments; I have given my free conſent, I have made my everlaſting choice: Lord Jeſus, confirm the contract, *Amen*.

Chap. VII. *Containing the Motives to Converſion.*

THough what is already ſaid of the Neceſſity of Converſion, and of the Miſeries of the Unconverted, might be ſufficient to induce

duce any conſidering mind to reſolve upon a preſent turning, or converſion unto God; yet knowing what a piece of deſperate obſtinacy and untractableneſs the heart of man naturally is, I have thought it neceſſary to add to the Means of Converſion, and Directions for a covenant cloſure with God in Chriſt, ſome Motives to perſuade you hereunto.

'O Lord, fail me not now, at my laſt attempts, 'If any ſoul have read hitherto, and be yet un-'touched, now, Lord faſten in him, and do thy 'work: Now take him by the heart, overcome 'him, perſuade him, till he ſay, Thou haſt prevail-'ed, for thou wert ſtronger than I. Lord, Didſt 'thou not make me a fiſher of men? And have I 'toiled all this while, and caught nothing? Alas, 'that I ſhould have ſpent my ſtrength for nought! 'And now I am caſting my laſt: Lord Jeſus, ſtand 'thou upon the ſhore, and direct how and where I 'ſhall ſpread my net; and let me ſo incloſe with ar-'guments the ſouls I ſeek for, that they may not be 'able to get out. Now, Lord, for a multitude of 'ſouls! Now for a full draught! O Lord God, re-'member me, I pray thee, and ſtrengthen me this 'once, O God.

But I turn me unto you.

Men and Brethren, heaven and earth do call upon you; yea, hell it ſelf doth preach the doctrine of Repentance unto you; the Angels of the Churches travel with you, *Gal.* 4. 19. the Angels of heaven wait for you, for your repenting, and turning unto God. O ſinner, Why ſhould the devils make merry with thee? Why ſhouldſt thou be a morſel for that devouring *Leviathan*; Why ſhould harpies and hell-hounds tear thee, and make a feaſt upon thee; and when they have got thee into the ſnare, and have faſtned their talons in thee, laugh at thy deſtruction, and

and deride thy miſery, and ſport themſelves with thy damnable folly? This muſt be thy caſe, except thou turn: And were it not better thou ſhouldſt be a joy to Angels, than a laughing ſtock and ſport for Devils? Verily, If thou wouldſt but come in, the heavenly hoſt would take up their Anthems, and ſing, *Glory be to God in the higheſt*; the morning-ſtars would ſing together, and all the ſons of God ſhout for joy, and celebrate this new Creation as they did the firſt. Thy repentance would, as it were, make holy-day in heaven, and the glorious Spirits would rejoice, in that there is a new brother added to their ſociety, *Rev.* 22. 9. another heir born to their Lord, and the loſt ſon received ſafe and ſound. The true penitent's tears are indeed the wine that cheereth both God and man.

If it be little, that Men and Angels would rejoice at thy converſion, know that God himſelf would rejoice over thee, even with ſinging, and reſt in his love, *Luke* 15. 9. *Iſa.* 62. 5. Never did *Jacob* with ſuch joy weep over the neck of his *Joſeph*, as thy heavenly Father would rejoice over thee, upon thy coming in to him. Look over the ſtory of the prodigal: Methinks I ſee how the aged father lays aſide his eſtate, and forgets his years: Behold how he runneth! *Luke* 15. 20. Oh the haſt that mercy makes! The ſinner makes not half that ſpeed. Methinks I ſee how his bowels turn, how his compaſſions yearn. (How quick-ſighted is love!) Mercy ſpies him a great way off, forget his riotous courſes, unnatural rebellion, horrid unthankfulneſs, debauched practices, (not a word of theſe,) but receives him with open arms, claſps about his neck, forgets the naſtineſs of his rags, kiſſeth the lips that deſerve to be loathed, the lips that had been joined to harlots, that had been commoners with the ſwine; calls for the fat-

ted calf, the best robe, the ring, the shooes, the best cheer in heaven's store, the best attire in heaven's wardrobe, *Luke* 15. 6, 9, 23. yea, the joy cannot be held in one breast, *&c.* others must be called to participate; the friends must meet, and make merry: Angels must wait, but the Prodigal must be set at the table, under his father's wing: He is the joy of the feast; he is the sweet subject of the father's delight: The friends sympathize, but none knows the felicity the father takes in his new born son, whom he hath received from the dead. Methinks I here the musick and the dancing at a distance. Oh the melody of the heavenly Choristers! I cannot learn the song, *Rev.* 14. 3. but methinks I over-hear the burden, at which all the harmonious Quire with one consent strike sweetly in; for thus goes the round at heaven's table, *For this is my son was dead, and is alive again, was lost, and is found*, Luke 5. 23, 24, 32. I need not farther explain the parable; God is the father, Christ is the cheer, his righteousness the robe, his graces the ornaments, Ministers, Saints, Angels the friends and servants; and thou that readest (If thou wilt but unfeignedly repent and turn) the welcome Prodigal, the happy instance of this grace and blessed subject of this joy and love.

O Rock! O Adamant! What! Not moved yet? Not yet resolved to turn forthwith, and to close with mercy? I will try thee yet once again: If one were sent to thee from the dead, wouldest thou be persuaded? Why, hear the voice from the dead, from the damned, crying to thee that thou shouldst repent. *I pray thee, that thou wouldst send him to my father's house, for I have five brethren, that he may testifie unto them least they also come into this place of torment. If one went unto them from the dead, they will repent*, Luke 16. 27, 28, *&c.* Hear, O man, thy predecessors

deceſſors in impenitence preach to thee from the infernal gibbets, from the flames, from the rack, that thou ſhouldſt repent. Oh, look down into the bottomleſs pit: Seeſt thou how the ſmoak of their torment aſcendeth for ever and ever? *Rev.* 14. 11. How black are the fiends; How furious are their tormentors? 'Tis their only muſick to hear how their miſerable patients roar, to hear their bones crack: 'Tis their meat and drink, to ſee how their fleſh frieth, and their fat droppeth; to drench them with burning metal; and to rip open their bodies, and to pour in the fierce burning braſs into their bowels, and the receſſes and ventricles of their hearts. What thinkeſt thou of thoſe chains of darkneſs, of thoſe inſtruments of cruelty? Canſt thou be content to burn? Seeſt thou how the worm gnaweth, how the oven gloweth, how the fire rageth? What ſayeſt thou to that river of brimſtone, that dark and horrible vant, that gulf of perdition; Wilt thou take up thy habitation here? Oh, lay thine ear to the door of hell: Heareſt thou the curſes and blaſphemies, the weepings and the wailings; how they lament their folly, and curſe their day? *Matth.* 22. 13. *Rev.* 16. 9. How do they roar, and yell, and gnaſh their teeth? How deep are their groans? How feeling are their moans? How unconceivable are their miſeries? If the ſhrieks of *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram* were ſo terrible (when the earth clave aſunder, and opened her mouth, and ſwallowed them up, and all that appertained to them,) that all *Iſrael* fled at the cry of them, *Numb.* 19. 33, 34. Oh, how fearful would the cry be, if God ſhould take off the covering from the mouth of hell, and let the cry of the damned aſcend in all its terrour among the children of men: And of all their moans and miſeries, this the piercing, killing emphaſis and burden, *for ever, for ever*

Why

Why, as God liveth, that made thy ſoul, thou art but a few hours diſtant from all this, except thou repent, and be converted.

Oh! I am even loſt and ſwallowed up in the abundance of thoſe arguments that I might ſuggeſt. If there be any point of wiſdom in all the world, it is to repent, and come in, if there be any thing righteous, any thing reaſonable, this is it: If there be any thing in the world that may be called madneſs and folly, and any thing that may be counted ſottiſh, abſurd, brutiſh, unreaſonable, it is this, to go on in thine unconverted eſtate. Let me beg thee as thou wouldſt not wilfully deſtroy thy ſelf, to ſit down and weigh, beſides what hath been ſaid, theſe following Motives, and let conſcience ſpeak, if it be not reaſon that thou ſhouldſt repent and turn.

1. *The God that made thee doth moſt graciouſly invite thee.*

Firſt, *His moſt ſweet and merciful nature doth invite thee.* O the kindneſs of God, his working bowels, his tender mercies! They are infinitely above our thoughts: Higher than heaven, what can we do? Deeper than hell, what can we know? *Job* 11.7,8,9. *He is full of compaſſion, and gracious; long ſuffering, and plenteous in mercy*, Pſal. 86. 15. This is a great argument to perſuade ſinners to come in, *turn unto the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, ſlow to anger, of great kindneſs, and repenteth him of the evil.* If God would not repent of the evil, it were ſome diſcouragement to us, why we ſhould not repent. If there were no hope of mercy, it were no ſuch wonder if rebels ſhould ſtand out: But never had ſubjects ſuch a gracious Prince, ſuch piety, patience, clemency, pity, to deal with, as you have. *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity?* &c. Mic. 7.18. O ſinners, ſee what a God you have to deal with! If you will but turn, *He will turn again, and have*

have compaſſion on you: He will ſubdue your iniquities, and caſt all your ſins into the depth of the ſea, v. 19. *Return unto me, ſaith the Lord of hoſts, and I will return unto you*, Mal. 3. 7. Zech. 1. 3. Sinners do not fail in that they have too high thoughts of God's mercies, but in that, 1. *They overlook his juſtice.* 2. *They promiſe themſelves mercy out of God's way.* His mercy is beyond all imagination, *Iſa.* 55. 9. great mercies, 1 *Chron.* 21. 13. manifold mercies, *Neh.* 9. 19. tender mercies, *Pſal.* 25. 6. ſure mercies, *Iſa.* 55. 3. everlaſting mercies, *Pſal.* 103. 17. *Iſa* 54. 8. and all thine own, if thou wilt but turn. Art thou willing to come in? Why, the Lord hath laid aſide his terrour, erected a throne of grace, holds forth the golden ſcepter: Touch, and live. Would a merciful man ſlay his enemy, when proſtrate at his feet, acknowledging his wrong, begging pardon, and offering to enter with him into a covenant of peace? Much leſs will the merciful God. Study his name, *Exod.* 34. 7. Read their experience, *Neh.* 9. 17.

Secondly, *His ſoul-encouraging calls and promiſes do invite thee.* Ah, what an earneſt ſuiter is mercy to thee! How lovingly, how inſtantly it calleth after thee! How paſſionately it wooeth thee! *Return, thou back-ſliding* Iſrael, *ſaith the Lord, and, I will not cauſe mine anger to fall upon you; for I am merciful, ſaith the Lord, and I will not keep anger for ever: Only acknowledge thine iniquity. Turn O back-ſliding children, ſaith the Lord, for I am married unto you: Return, and I will heal your back-ſlidings. Thou haſt played the harlot with many lovers, yet return unto me, ſaith the Lord*, Jer. 3. 11, 12, 13, 14, 22. *As I live, ſaith the Lord God, I have no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but that he turn from his way, and live: Turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O houſe of* Iſrael? Ezek. 33. 11. *If the wicked will turn from all his ſins that he hath committed, and keep all my ſtatutes, and do that which is lawful*

ful and right, he ſhall ſurely live, he ſhall not die. All his tranſgreſſions that he hath committed, they ſhall not be mentioned unto him: In his righteouſneſs that he hath done ſhall he live. Repent, and turn your ſelves from all your tranſgreſſions, ſo iniquity ſhall not be your ruin. Caſt away from you all your tranſgreſſions, and make you a clean heart, and a new ſpirit; for why will ye die O houſe of Iſrael; for I have no pleaſure in the death of him that dieth, ſaith the Lord God; wherefore turn your ſelves, and live ye, Ezek. 18. 21, 23, 30, 31, 32.

O melting, gracious words! The voice of a God, and not of a man! This is not the manner of men, for the offended Sovereign to ſue to the offending, traiterous varlet. Oh, how doth mercy follow thee, and plead with thee! Is not thy heart broken yet? Oh, that to day you would here his voice!

2. *The doors of heaven are thrown open to thee, the everlaſting gates are ſet wide for thee, and an abundant enterance into the kingdom of heaven adminiſtred to thee.* Chriſt now beſpeaks thee: (as ſhe her husband,) *Ariſe, and take poſſeſſion*, 1 Kings 21. 15. View the glory of the other world, as ſet forth in the map of the Goſpel. Get thee up into *Piſgah* of the promiſes and lift up thine eyes, weſtward, northward, ſouthward, and eaſtward, and ſee the good land that is beyond *Jordan*, and that goodly mountain. Behold the Paradiſe of God, watered with the ſtreams of glory. Ariſe, and walk through the land, in the length of it, and in the breadth of it; for the land which thou ſeeſt, the Lord will give it to thee for ever, if thou wilt but return, *Gen.* 13. 14, 15. 17. Let me ſay to thee, as *Paul* to *Agrippa, Believeſt thou the prophets?* If thou believeſt indeed, do but view what glorious things are ſpoken of the city of God, *Pſal.* 87. 3. and know, that all this is here tendred in the name of God to thee: As verily as God is true, it ſhall be

for

for ever thine, if thou wilt but throughly turn.

Behold the city of pure tranſparent gold, whoſe foundations are garniſhed with all manner of precious ſtones, whoſe gates are pearls, whoſe light is glory, whoſe temple is God. Believeſt thou this? If thou doſt, art thou not worſe than diſtracted that wilt not take poſſeſſion, when the gates are flung open to thee, and thou art bid to enter? O ye ſons of folly, will ye embrace the dunghils, and refuſe the kingdom? Behold, the Lord God taketh you up into the mountain, ſhews you the kingdom of heaven, and all the glory thereof; and tells you, *All this will I give you, if you will fall down and worſhip me*: If you will ſubmit to mercy, accept my Son, and ſerve me in righteouſneſs and holineſs. *O fools, and ſlow of heart to believe!* Will you court the harlot? Will you ſeek and ſerve the world, and neglect the eternal glory? What! Not enter into Paradiſe, when the flaming ſword that was once ſet to keep you out, is now uſed to drive you in! But you will ſay, I am uncharitable to think you infidels and unbelievers. Why, What ſhall I think you? Either you are deſperate unbelievers, that do not credit it? or ſtark diſtracted, that you know and believe the excellency and eternity of his glory, and yet do ſo fearfully neglect it. Surely you have no faith, or no reaſon; and I had almoſt ſaid, conſcience ſhould tell you ſo, before I leave you.

Do but attend what is offered you: O bleſſed kingdom! A Kingdom of Glory, 1 *Theſ.* 2. 1. a kingdom of righteouſneſs, 2 *Pet.* 3. 13. a kingdom of peace, *Rom.* 14. 17. and everlaſting kingdom, 2 *Pet.* 1. 11. Here thou ſhalt dwell, here thou ſhalt reign for ever, and the Lord ſhall ſet thee in a throne of glory, *Matth.* 19. 28. and with his own hand ſhall ſet the royal diadem upon thine head, and give thee a crown, not of thorns (for there ſhall be no

ſinning,

ſinning not ſuffering there, *Rev.* 21.27. 23. 3,4,5.) not of gold (for this ſhall be viler than the dirt in that day,) but a crown of life, *Jam.* 1. 12. a crown of righteouſneſs, 2 *Tim.* 4. 8. a crown of glory, 1 *Pet* 5. 4. Yea, thou ſhalt put on glory as a robe, 1 *Cor.* 15. 53. and ſhalt ſhine like the Sun in the firmament, in the glory of thy Father, *Matth.* 13. 43. Look now upon thy dirty fleſh, thy clay, thy worms meat: This very fleſh, this lump, this carcaſe ſhall be brighter than the ſtars, *Dan.* 12. 3. In ſhort, thou ſhalt be made like unto the Angels of God, *Luke* 20. 36. and behold his face in righteouſneſs, *Pſal.* 17. 15. Look in now, and tell me, Doſt thou yet believe? If not, conſcience muſt pronounce thee an infidel; for it is the very word of God that I ſpeak.

But if thou ſay thou believeſt, let me next know thy reſolutions. Wilt thou embrace this for thy happineſs? Wilt thou forego thy ſinful gains, thy forbidden pleaſures? Wilt thou trample on the world's eſteem, and ſpit in the harlot's face, and ſtop thine ears at her flatteries, and wreſt thee out of her embraces? Wilt thou be content to take up with preſent reproach and poverty, if it lie in thy way to heaven and follow the Lord with humble ſelf denial, in a mortified and fleſh diſpleaſing life? If ſo all is thine, and that for ever. And art not thou fairly offered? Is it not pity but he ſhould be damned, that will needs go on and periſh, when all this may be had for the taking? In a word, Wilt thou now cloſe with theſe proffers? Wilt thou take God at his word? Wilt thou let go thy hold-faſt of the world, and rid thy hands of thy ſins, and lay hold on eternal life? If not, let conſcience tell thee whither thou art not diſtracted, or bewitched, that thou ſhouldſt neglect ſo happy a choice, by which thou mighteſt be made for ever.

3. *God*

3. *God will ſettle unſpeakable priviledges at preſent upon thee,* 1 Cor. 3. 22. Heb. 12. 22, 23, 24. *Though the full of your bleſſedneſs ſhall be deferred till hereafter, yet God will give you no little things in hand.*

He will redeem you from your thraldom, *Joh.* 8. 36. He will pluck you from the paw of thy Lion, *Col.* 1. 13. The ſerpent ſhall bruiſe your heel, but you ſhall bruiſe his head, *Gen.* 3. 15. He ſhall deliver you from the preſent evil world, *Gal.* 1. 4. Proſperity ſhall not deſtroy you: Adverſity ſhall not ſeparate between him and you, *Rom.* 8. 35, 37, 38. He will redeem you from the power of the grave, *Pſal.* 49. 15. and make the King of terrours a meſſenger of peace to you. He will take out the curſe from the croſs, *Pſal.* 119. 71. and make affliction the fining-pot, the fan, the phyſick, to blow off the chaff, purifie the metal, and purge the mind, *Dan.* 12. 10. *Iſa.* 27. 9. He will ſave you from the arreſt of the law, and turn the curſe into a bleſſing to you, *Rom.* 6. 14. *Gal.* 3. 24. He hath the keys of hell and death, and ſhutteth that no man openeth, *Rev.* 3. 7. and 1. 18. and he will ſhut it's mouth, as once he did the Lions, *Dan.* 6. 22. that you ſhall not be hurt of the ſecond death, *Rev.* 2. 11.

But he will not only ſave you from miſery, but inſtall you into unſpeakable Prerogatives: He will beſtow himſelf upon you, he will be a friend unto you, and a father to you, 2 *Cor.* 6. 18. he will be a Sun and a ſhield to you, *Pſal.* 84. 11. In a word, He will be a God to you, *Gen.* 17. 7. And what can be ſaid more? What may you expect that a God ſhould do for you, and be to you, that he will be, that he will do. She that marries a Prince, expects he ſhould do for her like a Prince, that ſhe may live in a ſuitable ſtate, and have an anſwerable dowry. He that hath a King for his father, or friend, expects he ſhould do for him like a King. Alas! the

the Kings and Monarchs of the earth, ſo much above you, are but like the painted Butter-flies amongſt the reſt of their kind, or the fair coloured Palmer-worm amongſt the reſt of the worms, if compared with God. As he doth infinitely exceed the glory and power of his glittering duſt, ſo he will, beyond all proportion, exceed in doing for his Favourites, whatever Princes can do for theirs. He will give you grace and glory, and with-hold no good thing from you, *Pſal.* 84. 11. He will take you for his ſons and daughters, and make you heirs of his promiſes, *Heb.* 6. 17. and eſtabliſh his everlaſting covenant with you, *Jer.* 32. 40. He will juſtifie you from all that law, conſcience, Satan, can charge upon you, *Rom.* 8. 33, 34. He will give you free acceſs into his preſence, and accept your perſon, and receive your prayers, *Epheſ.* 3. 12. and 1. 6. 1 *Joh.* 5. 14. He will abide in you, and make you the men of his ſecrets, and hold a conſtant and friendly communion with you, *Joh.* 14. 23. and 15. 15. 1 *Joh.* 1. 3. His ear ſhall be open, his door open, his ſtore open at all times to you. His bleſſing ſhall reſt upon you, and he will make your enemies to ſerve you, and work about all things for good unto you, *Pſal.* 115. 13. *Rom.* 8. 28.

4. *The terms of mercy are brought as low as poſſible to you.* God hath ſtooped as low to ſinners, as with honour he can. He will not be thought a fautor of ſin, nor ſtrain the glory of his holineſs: And whither could he come lower than he hath, unleſs he ſhould do this? He hath abated the impoſſible terms of the firſt Covenant, *Jer.* 3. 13. *Mark* 5. 36. *Acts* 16. 31. and 3. 19. *Prov.* 28. 13. He doth not impoſe any thing unreaſonable, or Impoſſible, as a condition of life upon you. Two things were neceſſary to be done, according to the tenour of the firſt Covenant, by you: 1. *That you ſhould fully ſatisfie*

ſatisfie the demands of Juſtice for paſt offences. 2. *That you ſhould perform perſonally, perfectly and perpetually the whole Law for the time to come.* Both theſe are to us impoſſible, *Rom.* 8. 3. But behold God's gracious abatement in both: He doth not ſtand upon ſatisfaction, he is content to take of the Surety (and he of his own providing too) what he might have exacted from you, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19. He declares himſelf to have received a ranſom, *Job* 33. 24. 1 *Tim.* 2. 6. and that he expects nothing but that you ſhould accept his Son, and he ſhall be righteouſneſs and redemption to you, *Joh.* 1. 12. 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. And for the future obedience, here he is content to yield to your weakneſs, and omit the rigour. He doth not ſtand upon perfection (as a condition of life, though he ſtill inſiſts upon it as due) but is content to accept of ſincerity, *Gen.* 17. 1. *Prov.* 11. 20. Though you cannot pay the full debt, he will accept you according to that which you have, and take willing for doing, and the purpoſe for the performance, 2 *Cor.* 8. 12. 2 *Chron.* 6. 8. *Heb.* 11. 17. And if you come in his Chriſt, and ſet your hearts to pleaſe him, and make it the chief of your cares, he will approve and reward you, though the veſſel be marred in your hands.

Oh, conſider your Maker's condeſcention, Let me ſay to you, as *Naaman's* ſervant to him; *My father, if the Prophet had bid thee do ſome great thing, wouldſt thou not have done it? How much rather when he ſaith unto thee, Waſh and be clean?* 2 Kings 5. 13. If God had demanded ſome terrible, ſome ſevere and rigorous thing of you, to eſcape eternal damnation, would you not have done it? Suppoſe it had been to ſpend all your days in ſorrow in ſome howling wilderneſs, or pine your ſelves with famine, or to offer the fruit of your bodies for the ſin of your ſouls, would you not have thankfully accepted eternal redemption,

demption, though theſe had been the conditions? Yea, farther: If God ſhould have told you, you ſhould have fried in the fire for millions of ages, or been ſo long tormented in hell, would you not have gladly accepted it? Alaſs! All theſe are not ſo much as one ſand in the glaſs of eternity. If your offended Creator ſhould have held you but one year upon the rack, and then bid you come and forſake your ſins, accept Chriſt, and ſerve him a few years in ſelf-denial, or lie in this caſe for ever and ever: Do you think you ſhould have ſtuck at the offer, and diſputed the terms, and have been unreſolved whether you were beſt to accept of the motion? O ſinner, return and live: Why ſhouldſt thou die, when life is to be had for the taking, and mercy ſhould be beholding to thee (as it were) to be ſaved? Couldſt thou ſay indeed, *Lord, I knew that thou waſt an hard man*, Matth.25.24.thou hadſt ſome little excuſe: But when the God of heaven had ſtooped ſo low, and bated ſo far, if now thou ſhouldſt ſtand off, who ſhall plead for thee?

Obj. Notwithſtanding all theſe abatements, I am no more able to perform thoſe conditions (in themſelves ſo eaſie) of faith and repentance, and ſincere obedience, than to ſatisfie and fulfil the law.

Anſw. Theſe you may perform, by God's grace enabling; whereas the other are naturally impoſſible in this ſtate, even to believers themſelves. But let the next conſideration ſerve for a fuller anſwer.

5. *Wherein you are impotent, God doth offer grace to enable you. I have ſtretched out my hand, and no man regarded*, Prov. 1.24. What though you are plunged into the ditch of that miſery, from which you can never get out? Chriſt offereth to help you out; he ſtretcheth his hand to you, and if you periſh, it is for

for refuſing his help. *Behold, I ſtand at the door, and knock: If any man open to me, I will come in,* Rev. 3. 20. What though you are poor, and wretched, and blind, and naked; Chriſt offereth a cure for your blindneſs, a cover for your nakedneſs, a remedy for your poverty, he tendreth you his righteouſneſs, his graces: *I counſel thee to buy of me gold, that thou mayeſt be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayeſt be cloathed; and anoint thine eyes with eye-ſalve, that thou mayeſt ſee,* Rev. 3. 17, 18. Do you ſay, The condition is impoſſible, for I have not wherewith to buy? You muſt know that this buying is without money, and without price, *Iſa.* 55. 1. This buying is by begging, and ſeeking with diligence and conſtancy in the uſe of God's means, *Prov.* 2. 3, 4. God commandeth thee to know him, and to fear him. Doſt thou ſay, Yea, but my mind is blinded, and my heart is hardened from his fear? I anſwer, God doth offer to enlighten thy mind, and to teach thee his fear; that is preſented to thy choice, *Prov.* 1. 29. *For that they hated knowledge, and did not chuſe the fear of the Lord.* So that now, if men live in ignorance and eſtrangement from the Lord, it is becauſe *they will not underſtand, and deſire not the knowledge of his ways,* Job 21. 14. *If thou crieſt after knowledge, if thou ſeekeſt her as ſilver,* &c. *then ſhalt thou underſtand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God,* Prov. 2. 3, 4, 5. Is not here a fair offer? *Turn you at my reproof, Behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you,* Prov. 1. 23. Though of your ſelves you cannot do nothing, yet you may do all through his Spirit enabling you; and he doth offer aſſiſtance to you. God bids you *waſh, and make you clean,* Iſa. 1. 16. You ſay, you are unable, as much as the Leopard to waſh out his ſpots, *Jer.* 13. 23. Yea, but the Lord doth offer to purge you; ſo that if you be filthy ſtill. It is through your own wilfulneſs, *Ezek.* 24. 13. *I have purged thee, and thou*

waſt

waſt not purged, Jer. 13. 27. *O* Jeruſalem, *wilt thou not be made clean? When ſhall it once be?* God doth wait when you will be made clean, when you will yield to his motions, and accept of his offers, and let him do for and in you, what you cannot do for your ſelves. You do not know how much God will do upon your importunity, if you will but be reſtleſs, and inſtant with him, *Luke* 11. 8. and 18. 5.

If God hath not bound himſelf by expreſs promiſe to wicked men, to give them grace in the diligent uſe of the means, yet he hath given them abundant encouragement to expect it from him, if they ſeek it earneſtly in his way. His moſt gracious nature is abundant encouragement. If a rich and moſt bountiful man ſhould ſee thee in miſery, and bid thee come to his door; wouldſt thou not, with confidence, expect, at thy coming, to find ſome relief? Thou art not able to believe, nor repent: God appoints thee to uſe ſuch and ſuch means in order to thy obtaining faith and repentance: Doth not this argue that God will beſtow theſe upon thee if thou doſt ply him diligently in prayer, meditation, reading, hearing, ſelf-examination, and the reſt of his means? Otherwiſe God ſhould but mock his poor creatures, to put them upon theſe ſelf denying endeavours, and then, when they have put hard to it, and continued waiting upon him for grace, deny them at laſt. Surely if a ſweet natured man would not deal thus, much leſs will the moſt merciful and gracious God.

I intended to have added many other arguments, but theſe have ſwoln under my hands; and I hope the judicious Reader will rather look upon the weight, than number.

The Concluſion of the whole.

AND now, my brethren, let me know your minds: What do you intend to do? Will you go on and die; or will you ſet upon a through and ſpeedy converſion, and lay hold on eternal life? How long will ye linger in *Sodom*? How long will you halt between two opinions? I *Kings* 18. 21. Are you not yet reſolved whether Chriſt or *Barabbas*, whether bliſs or torment, whether the land of *Cabul*, 1 *Kings* 9. 13. or the Paradiſe of God, be the better choice? It is a diſputable caſe, whether the *Abana* and *Parphar* of *Damaſcus*, be better than all the ſtreams of *Eden*; or whether the vile puddle of ſin be to be preferred before the water of life, clear as cryſtal, proceeding out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb? Can, the world in good earneſt, do that for you, that Chriſt can? Will it ſtand by you to eternity? Will pleaſures, titles, lands, treaſures, deſcend with you? *Pſal.* 49. 17. 1 *Tim.* 6. 7. If not, had you not need look after ſomewhat at that will? What mean you to ſtand wavering, to be off and on? Fooliſh children! How long will you ſtick between the womb and the world? Shall I leave you at laſt no farther than *Agrippa*, but almoſt perſuaded? Why, you are forever loſt, if left here: As good not at all, as not altogether Chriſtians. You are half of the mind to give over your former negligent life, and to ſet a ſtrict and holy courſe; you could wiſh you were as ſome others be, and could do as they can do: How long will you reſt in idle wiſhes, and fruitleſs purpoſes? When will you come to a fixed, full, and firm reſolve? Do not you ſee how Satan gulls you, by tempting you to delays? How long hath he toll'd you on in the way of perdition? How many years have you been purpoſing

posing to amend? What if God should have taken you off this while?

Well, put me not off with a dilatory answer: Tell me not of hereafter, I must have your present consent. If you be not now resolved, while the Lord is treating with you, and wooing of you, much less are you like to be hereafter, when these impressions are worn out, and you are hardned through the deceitfulness of sin. Will you give me your hands? Will you set open the doors, and give the Lord Jesus the full and present possession? Will you put your names into his covenant? Will you subscribe? What do you resolve upon? If you are still upon your delays, my labour is lost, and all is like to come to nothing. Fain I would, that you should now put in your adventures. Come cast in your lot, make your choice: *Now is the accepted time, now is the day of thy salvation: To day if you will hear his voice.* Why should not this be the day from whence thou shouldst be able to date thine happiness? Why shouldst thou venture a day longer in this dangerous and dreadful condition? What if God should this night require thy soul? *Oh that thou mightest know, in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace, before they be hid from thine eyes,* Luke 19. 42. This is thy day, and it is but a day, *Joh.* 9. 4. Others have had their day, and have received their doom; and now art thou brought upon the stage of this world, here to act thy part for the whole eternity. Remember thou art now upon thy good behaviour for everlasting; if thou make not a wise choice now, thou art undone for ever. Look what thy present choice is, such must thine eternal condition be, *Luke* 10. 24. and 16. 25. *Prov.* 1. 27, 28, 29.

And is it true, indeed? Is life and death at thy choice? Yea, 'tis as true as truth is, *Deut.* 30. 19.

Why

Why then, what hinders but that thou ſhouldſt be happy? Nothing doth or can hinder, but thine own wilful neglect, or refuſal. It was the paſſage of the Eunuch to *Philip*: *See, here is water: What doth hinder me to be baptized?* So I may ſay to thee. See, here is Chriſt; here is mercy, pardon, life: What hinders, but that thou ſhouldſt be pardoned, and ſaved? One of the Martyrs, as he was praying at the ſtake, had his pardon ſet by in a box, (which, indeed, he refuſed deſervedly, becauſe upon unworthy terms): But here the terms are moſt honourable and eaſie. O ſinner wilt thou burn with thy pardon by thee? Why, do but forthwith give up thy conſent to Chriſt, to renounce thy ſins, deny thy ſelf, take up the yoake, and the croſs, and thou carrieſt the day, Chriſt is thine, pardon, peace, life, bleſſedneſs, all are thine: And is not this an offer worth the embracing? Why ſhouldſt thou heſitate, or doubtfully diſpute about the caſe? Is it not paſt controverſie, whether God be better *than ſin, and glory better* than vanity? Why ſhouldſt thou forſake thine own mercy, and ſin againſt thine own life? When wilt thou ſhake off thy ſloth, and lay by thine excuſes? *Boaſt not thy ſelf of to morrow*, thou knoweſt not where this night may lodge thee, *Prov.* 27. 1.

Beloved, Now the Holy Spirit is ſtriving with *you*: He will not always ſtrive. Haſt thou not felt thy heart warmed by the word, and been almoſt perſuaded to leave off thy ſins, and come in to God; Haſt thou not felt ſome good motions in thy mind, wherein thou haſt been warned of thy danger, and told what thy careleſs courſe would end in? It may be thou art like young *Samuel*, who when the Lord called once and again, he knew not the voice of the Lord, 1 *Sam.* 3. 6, 7. But theſe motions and *items* are the offers and eſſays, and calls, and ſtrivings of the ſpirit: Oh, take the advantage of the tide, and know the day of thy viſitation.

Now the Lord Jeſus ſtretcheth wide his arms to receive you: He beſeecheth you by us. How movingly, how meltingly, how pitifully, how paſſionately he calleth! The Church is put into a ſudden extaſie upon the ſound of his voice, *The voice of my beloved*, Cant. 2. 8. Oh, wilt thou turn a deaf ear to his voice? It is not the voice that breaketh the Cedars, and maketh the mountains to Skip like a calf; that ſhaketh the wilderneſs, and divideth the flames of fire: It is not *Sinai*'s thunder, but the ſoft and ſtill voice. It is not the voice of Mount *Ebal*, a voice of curſing and terrour; but the voice of Mount *Gerizim*, the voice of bleſſing and of glad tidings of good things. It is not the voice of the trumpet, nor the noiſe of war; but a meſſage of peace from the King of peace, *Epheſ.* 6. 15. 2 *Cor.* 5. 18, 20. Methinks it ſhould be with thee, as with the Spouſe, *My ſoul failed when he ſpake*, Cant. 5. 6. I may ſay to thee O ſinner, as *Martha* to her ſiſter, *The Maſter is come, and he calleth for thee*, Joh. 11, 28. Oh, now, with *Mary*, ariſe quickly, and come unto him. How ſweet are his invitations! He crieth in the open courſe, *If any man thirſt, let him come unto me and drink*, Joh. 7. 37. Prov. 1. 21. He broacheth his own body for thee: Oh, come and lay thy mouth to his ſide. How free is he! He excludeth none: *Whoſoever will, let him come and take the water of life freely*, Rev. 22. 17. *Who is ſimple, let him turn in hither, Come, eat of my bread drink of the wine which I have mingled. Forſake the fooliſh, and live*, Prov. 9. 4, 5, 6. *Come unto me*, &c. *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, and ye ſhall find reſt unto your ſouls*, Matth. 11. 28. 29. *Him that cometh to me, I will in no wiſe caſt out*, Joh. 6. 37. How doth he bemoan the obſtinate refuſer? O Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem! *How often would I have gathered thy children, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!* Matth. 23. 37. *Behold me,*

me, behold me: I have ſtretched out my hands all the day to a rebellious people, Iſa. 65. 1, 2. Oh, be perſuaded now at laſt, to throw your ſelves into the arms of love.

Behold, O ye ſons of men, the Lord Jeſus hath thrown open the priſons and now he cometh to you (as the Magiſtrates once to them, *Acts* 16. 39.) and beſeecheth you to come out. If it were from a Palace, or a Paradice, that Chriſt did call you, it were no wonder if you were unwilling; (and yet, how eaſily was *Adam* tolled from thence!) but it is from your priſon, ſirs, from your chains, from the dungeon, from the darkneſs, that he calleth you, *Iſa.* 42. 6, 7. and yet will you not come? He calleth you unto liberty, *Gal.* 5. 13. and yet will you not hearken? His yoke is eaſie, his laws are liberty, his ſervice freedom, *Matth.* 11. 30. *Jam.* 1. 25. 1 *Cor.* 7. 22. and (whatever prejudices you have againſt his ways) if a God may be believed, you ſhall find them all pleaſure and peace, and ſhall taſte ſweetneſs and joy unutterable, and take infinite delight and felicity in them, *Prov.* 3. 17. *Pſal.* 119. 165. 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. *Pſal.* 119. 103, 111.

Beloved, I am loath to leave you: I cannot tell how to give you over. I am now ready to ſhut up, but fain I would drive this bargain between Chriſt and you, before I end. What! Shall I leave you as I found you at laſt? Have you read hitherto, and are not yet reſolved upon a preſent abandoning all your ſins, and cloſing with Jeſus Chriſt? Alas, What ſhall I ſay? What ſhall I do? Will you turn off all my importunity? Have I run in vain? Have I uſed ſo many arguments, and ſpent ſo much time to perſuade you, and yet muſt ſit down at laſt in diſappointment? But it is a ſmall matter that you turn me off; you put a ſlight upon the God that made you, you reject the bowels and beſeechings of a Sa-

viour, and will be found resisters of the Holy Ghost, *Acts* 7. 51. if you will not now be prevailed with to repent and be converted.

Well, though I have called you long and ye have refused, I shall yet this once more lift up my voice like a trumpet, and cry from the highest places of the city, before I conclude with a miserable *Conclamatum est.* Once more I shall call after regardless sinners, that, if it be possible, I may awaken them. *O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord,* Jer. 22. 29. Unless you be resolved to die lend your ears, to the last calls of mercy. Behold in the name of God I make open proclamation to you: *Hearken unto me O ye children: Hear instruction and be wise, and refuse it not,* Prov. 8. 32, 33.

Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat: Yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money, and without price. Wherefore do ye spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight it self in fatness. Incline your ear, and come ye unto me; hear, and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David, Isa. 55. 1, 2, 3.

Ho, every one that is sick of any manner of disease or torment, *Matth.* 4. 23, 24. or is possessed with an evil spirit, whether of pride, or fury, or lust, or covetousness, come ye to the Physician, bring away your sick: Lo, here is he that *healeth all manner of sickness, and all manner of diseases among the people.*

Ho, every one that is in debt, and every one that is in distress, and every one that is discontented; gather your selves unto Christ and he will become a Captain over you, He will be your protection from the arrests of the Law, he will save you from the hand of justice. Behold he is an open sanctuary to

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you, he is a known refuge, *Heb.* 6. 18. *Pſal.* 48. 3. Away with your ſins, and come in unto him, leſt the avenger of blood ſeize you, leſt devouring wrath overtake you.

Ho, every ignorant ſinner, come and buy eye-ſalve, that thou mayeſt ſee, *Rev.* 3. 18. Away with thine excuſes; thou art for ever loſt, if thou continueſt in this eſtate, 2 *Cor.* 4. 3. But accept of Chriſt for thy Prophet, and he will be a light unto thee, *Iſa.* 42. 6. *Epheſ.* 5. 14. Cry unto him for knowledge, ſtudy his word, take pains about the principles of Religion, humble thy ſelf before him, and he will teach thee his way, and make thee wiſe unto ſalvation, *Matth.* 13. 36. *Luke* 8. 9. *Joh.* 5. 39. *Pſal.* 25. 9. But if thou wilt not follow him in the painful uſe of his means, but ſit down becauſe thou haſt but one talent, he will condemn thee for a wicked and ſlothful ſervant, *Matth.* 25. 24, 26.

Ho, every profane ſinner, come in and live: Return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon thee: Be intreated. Oh, *return, come*: Thou that haſt filled thy mouth with oaths and execrations, all manner of ſins and blaſphemies ſhall be forgiven thee, *Mat.* 3. 28. if thou wilt but throughly turn unto Chriſt, and come in. Though thou waſt as unclean as *Magdalen, yet put away thy whoredoms out of thy ſight, and thine adulteries from between thy breaſts*, and give up thy ſelf unto Chriſt, as a veſſel of holineſs alone for his uſe; and then, *though thy ſins be as ſcarlet, they ſhall be as wool; and though they be as crimſon, they ſhall be as white as ſnow*, Luke 7. 37. Hoſ. 2. 2. 1 Theſ. 4. 4. Iſa. 1. 18.

Hear, O ye drunkards, *How long will you be drunken? Put away your wine*, 1 Sam. 1. 14. Though you have rolled in the vomit of your ſin, take the vomit of repentance, and heartily diſgorge your beloved luſts, and the Lord will receive you, 2 *Cor.* 6. 17.

Give up your ſelves unto Chriſt, to live ſoberly righteouſly and godly; embrace his righteouſneſs, accept his government; and though you have been ſwine, he will waſh you, *Rev.* 3. 6.

Hear, O ye looſe companions, whoſe delight is in vain and wicked ſociety, to ſport away your time in carnal mirth and jollity with them; come in at wiſdom's call, and chuſe her, and her ways, and you ſhall live, *Prov.* 9. 5, 6.

Hear O ye ſcorners, hear the word of the Lord: Though you have made a ſport at godlineſs, and the profeſſors thereof; though you have made a ſcorn of Chriſt, and of his ways; yet, even to you doth he call, to gather you under the wings of his mercy, *Prov.* 1. 22, 23. In a word, Though you ſhould be found among the worſt of that black roll, 1 *Cor.* 6. 9, 10. yet, upon your through converſion you ſhall be waſhed, you ſhall be juſtified, you ſhall be ſanctified, in the name of the Lord Jeſus, and by the Spirit of our God, *ver.* 11.

Ho, every formal profeſſor, that are but a luke-warm and dough-baked Chriſtian, and reſteſt in the form of godlineſs; give over thy halving, and thy halting; be a throughout Chriſtian, and be zealous, and repent; and then, though thou hadſt been an offence to Chriſt's ſtomach, thou ſhalt be the joy of his heart, *Rev.* 3. 16, 19, 20.

And now bear witneſs that mercy hath been offered you: *I call heaven and earth to record againſt you this day, that I have ſet before you life and death, bleſſing and curſing; therefore chuſe life, that you may live*, Deut. 30. 19. I can but woo you, and warn you; I cannot compel you to be happy; If I could, I would. What anſwer will you ſend me with, to my Maſter? Let me ſpeak unto you, as *Abraham*'s ſervant to them; *And now, if you will deal kindly and truly with my Maſter, tell me*, Gen. 24. 49. Oh, for ſuch a happy anſwer

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as *Rebekah* gave to them, *Gen.* 24. 57, 58. *And they said, We will call the damsel, and enquire at her mouth. And they called* Rebekah: *and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go.* Oh that I had but thus from you! Why should I be your accuser, *Matth.* 10. 14, 15. who thirst for your salvation? Why should the passionate pleadings and wooing of mercy be turned into the horrid aggravations of your obstinacy, and additions to your misery? Judge in your selves: Do you not think their condemnation will be doubly dreadful, that shall still go on in their sins, after all endeavours to recall them? Doubtless, *it shall be more tolerable for* Tyre *and* Sidon, *yea, for* Sodom *and* Gomorrah, *in the day of judgment, than for you,* Matth. 11. 22, 24.

Beloved, If you have any pity for your perishing souls, close with the present offers of mercy; If you would not continue and increase the pains of your travailing Ministers, do not stick in the birth. If the God that made you have any authority with you obey his command, and come in. If you are not the despisers of grace, and would not shut up the doors of mercy against your selves, repent and be converted. Let not heaven stand open for you in vain: Let not the Lord Jesus open his wares, and bid you buy without money, and without price in vain: Let not his Ministers, and his Spirit strive with you in vain, and leave you now at last unperswaded, lest the sentence go forth against you, *The bellows are burnt, the lead is consumed of the fire, the founder melteth in vain. Reprobate silver shall men call them, because the Lord hath rejected them,* Jer. 6. 29, 39.

Father of spirits, take the heart in hand that is so hard for my weakness: Do not thou have ended, though I have done: half a word from thine effectual power, will do the work. O thou that hast the key of David, *that openest when no man shutteth, open thou this heart, as thou didst*

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Lydia's, and let the King of glory enter in, and make this soul thy captive. Let not the tempter harden him in delays: Let him not stir from this place, nor take his eyes from these lines, till he be resolved to forgo his sins, and to accept of life upon thy self-denying terms. In thy name, O Lord God, did I go forth to these labours; in thy name do I shut them up: Let not all the time they have cost, be but lost hours; Let not all the thoughts of heart, and all the pains that have been about them, be but lost labour. Lord, put in thine hand into the heart of this Reader, and send thy Spirit, as once thou didst Philip, to join himself to the chariot of the Eunuch, while he was reading the word. And though I should never know it while I live, yet I beseech thee, Lord God, let it be found at that day, that some souls are converted by these labours: And let some be able to stand forth, and say, that by these persuasions they were won unto thee. Amen, Amen. Let him that readeth say, Amen.

Mr. Alleine's Counsel for Personal and Family-Godliness.

BEloved, I despair of ever bringing you to salvation, without sanctification; or possessing you of happiness, without persuading you to holiness. God knows, I have not the least hope ever to see of your faces in heaven, except you be converted, and sanctified, and exercise your selves unto godliness. I beseech you, study personal godliness, and family godliness.

1. Personal godliness. Let it be your first care to set up Christ in your hearts. See that you make all your worldly interests to stoop to him, that you be entirely and unreservedly, devoted unto him. If you wilfully, and deliberately, and ordinarily harbour any sin, you are undone, *Psal.* 68. 21. *Ezek.* 18. 20. See that you unfeignedly take the Law of Christ, as the rule of your words, thoughts and actions; and subject your whole man, members and mind faithfully to him, *Psal.* 119. 34. *Rom.* 6. 13. If you have not a true respect to all God's Commandments, you are unsound at heart, *Psal.* 119. 6. Oh, study to get the image and impress of Christ upon you within. Begin with your hearts, else you build without foundation. Labour to get a saving change within; or else all external performances will be to no purpose: And then study to shew forth the power of godliness in the life.

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Let piety be your first and great business: 'Tis the highest point of justice to give God his due. Beware that none of you be a prayerless person; for that is a most certain discovery of a Christless, and a graceless person; of one that is a very stranger to the fear of God, *Psal.* 14.4. *Joh.* 15.4. Suffer not your Bibles to gather dust: See that you converse daily with the word, *Joh.* 5.39. That man can never lay claim to blessedness, whose delight is not in the law of the Lord, *Psal.* 1.1, 2. Let meditation and self-examination be your daily exercise.

But piety, without charity, is but the half of Christianity; or rather impious hypocrisie. We may not divide the *Tables*: See therefore that you do justly, and love mercy, and let equity and charity run like an even thread, throughout all your dealings. Be you temperate in all things, and let chastity and sobriety be your undivided companions. Let truth and purity, seriousness and modesty, heaviness and gravity, be the constant ornaments of your speech. Let patience and humility, simplicity, sincerity, shine out in all the parts of your conversations. See that you forget and forgive wrongs, and requite them with kindness, as you would be found children of the Most High. Be merciful in your censures, and put the most favourable construction upon your brethren's carriage, that their actions will reasonably bear. Be slow in promising, punctual in fulfilling. Let meekness and innocency, affableness, yieldingness and courtesie commend your conversations to all men. Let none of your relations want that love and loyalty, that reverence and duty, that tenderness, care, and vigilancy, which their several places and capacities call for: This is throughout godliness. I charge you before the most high God that none of you be found a swearer, or a lyar, a lover of evil company, or a scoffer, or malicious, or covetous, or a drunkard, or a glutton, unrighteous in his dealing, unclean in his living, or a quarreller, or a thief, or a backbiter, or a railer: For I denounce unto you, from the living God, that destruction and damnation is the end of all such, *Prov.* 13. 20. *Jam.* 5. 12. *Rev.* 21. 8. 1 *Cor.* 6. 9, 10. *Gal.* 5. 19, 20, 21.

2. Family Godliness. He that hath set up Christ in his Heart, will be sure to study to set him up in his House. Let every Family with you be a Christian Church, 1 *Cor.* 19. 19. every house a house of prayer: Let every Householder say, with *Joshua*, *I and my house will serve the Lord,*

Lord, Josh. 24. 15. and resolve with *David*, *I will walk within my house with a perfect heart*, Psal. 101. 2. Let me press upon you a few duties in general.

First, Let Religion be in your families, not as a matter by the by (to be minded at leisure, when the world will give you leave) but the standing business of the house: Let them have your prayers as duly as their meals. Is there any of your families, but have time for their taking food? Wretched man! Canst thou find time to eat in, and not find time to pray in?

Secondly, Settle it upon your hearts, that your souls are bound up in the souls of your family. They are committed unto you, and if they be lost through your neglect, will be required at your hands. Sirs, if you do not, you shall know, that the charge of Souls is a heavy charge, and that the blood of souls is a heavy guilt. O man, hast thou a charge of souls to answer for, and dost thou not yet bestir thy self for them, that their blood be not found in thy Skirts? Wilt thou do no more for immortal souls, than thou wilt do for thy beasts that perish? What dost thou do for thy children and servants? Thou providest meat and drink for them, agreeable to their natures: And dost thou not the same for thy beasts? Thou givest them medicines, and cherishest them when they be sick: And dost thou not as much for thy swine? More particularly.

6 JU 62

1. Let the solemn reading of the word and singing of Psalms, be your family exercises, *Isa.* 34. 26. *Joh.* 5. 39. *Psal.* 118. 15. See Christ singing with his family, *viz.* his Disciples, *Mat.* 26. 30. *Luk.* 9. 18.

2. Let every person in your families be duly called to an account of their profiting by the word heard or read, as they be about doing your own business. This is a duty of consequence unspeakable and would be a means to bring those under your charge, to remember and profit by what they receive. See Christ's example in calling his Family to an account, *Matt.* 16. 11, 13, 15.

3. Often take an account of the souls under your care, concerning their Spiritual estates; [herein you must be followers of Christ, *Matt.* 13. 10, 36, 51. *Mar.* 4. 10, 11.] make inquiry into their Conditions, insist much upon the sinfulness and misery of their natural estate, and upon the necessity of regeneration and conversion in order to their salvation. Admonish them gravely of

their

their ſins, encourage their beginnings. Follow them earneſtly, and let them have no quiet for you, till you ſee them in a ſaving change. This is a duty of high conſequence, but (I am afraid) fearfully neglected. Doth not Conſcience ſay, thou art the Man?

4 Look to the right ſanctifying of the Sabbath by all your houſhold, *Ex.* 20. 19. *Lev.* 23. 3. Many poor families have little time elſe. O improve but your Sabbath days as diligently in labouring for knowledge, and doing your Makers work, as you do the other days in doing your own work, and I doubt not but you may come to ſome proficiency.

5. Let the Morning and Evening Sacrifice of ſolemn prayer, be daily offered up in all your families, *Pſal.* 92. 1, 2. *Exod.* 30, 7, 8. *Luk.* 1. 9 10. Beware they be not found among the families that call not upon God's name, for why ſhould there be wrath from the Lord, upon your families? *Jer.* 10. 25. O miſerable families, without God in the world that are without family prayer! what! have you ſo many family ſins, family wants, family mercies, what! and yet no family prayers? how do you pray with all prayer and ſupplication, if you do not with family prayer? *Eph.* 6. 18. Say not, I have no time, What, haſt thou all thy time, on purpoſe to ſerve God, and ſave thy ſoul? and yet is this it for which thou canſt find no time? find but a heart, and I will find time. Pinch out of your meals, and ſleep, rather than want for Prayer. Say not, my buſineſs will not give leave. This is the greateſt buſineſs to ſave thy ſelf, and the ſouls committed to thee. Buſineſs, a whet will be no let. In a Word, the bleſſing of all is to be got by prayer, *Jer.* 29. 11, 12. 2 *Sam.* 7. 29. and what is thy buſineſs without God's bleſſing? ſay not, I am not able. Uſe the one talent, and God will increaſe, *Mat.* 25. 24, &c. Helps are to be had, till thou art better able. But if there be no other remedy, thou muſt join with thine abler neighbour, God hath ſpecial regard to joint-prayer, *Jam.* 5. 4, to 19. *Act.* 12. 5, 10, 12. 2 *Cor.* 1. 11. and therefore you muſt improve family advantages for the performing of it.

6. Put every one in your families upon private prayer. Obſerve whether they do perform it. Get them the help of a form, if they need it, till they are able to go without it. Direct them how to pray, by minding them of their ſins, wants and mercies, the materials of prayer. This

was the practice of *John.* and of Jesus, *Luk.* 11. 1, 2, &c.

7. Set up catechising in your families, at the least once every week. Have you no dread of the Almighty's charge, that you should *teach these things diligently to your children, and talk of them as you sit in your houses,* &c. Deut. 6.6,7,8,9. *and* 4.9,10. *and* 11. 18, 19, 20. and *train them up in the way wherein they should go,* Prov. 22. 6. the margin. Hath God so commanded *Abraham,* that he would teach *his children and household* Gen. 18.19. and that he had many *instructed servants,* Gen. 14.14. see the margin, and given such a promise to him thereupon; and will not you put in for a share, neither in praise, nor the promise? Hath Christ honoured catechising with his presence, *Luk.* 2.46. and will your not own it with your practice? Say not they are careless, and will not learn: What have you your authority for, if not to use it for God, and the good of their souls? You will call them up, and force them to do your work; and should you not at least be as zealous in putting them upon God's work; Say not, they are dull, and are not capable: If they be dull, God requires of you the more pains, and patience, but so dull as they are, you will make them to learn how to work; and can they not learn as well how to live? Are they capable of the mysteries of your trade, and are they not capable of the plain principles of Religion? Well, as ever you would see the growth of Religion, the cure of ignorance, the remedy of profaneness, the downfall of error, fulfil you my Joy in going through with this duty.

Will you answer the calls of divine providence? Would you remove the incumbeur, or prevent the impending calamities? Would you plant nurseries for the church of God? would you that God should build your houses, and bless your substance? Would you that your children should bless you? O then set up piety in your families, as ever you would be blessed, or be a blessing: let your hearts and your houses be the temples of the living God, in which his worship (according to all the said mentioned directions) may be with constancy reverendly performed, Prov. 29. 1. *He that being often reproved, hardneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy,* Oh, be wise in time, that you be not miserable to eternity.

FINIS.